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ENVIRONMENT IN RELATION TO NERVOUS

STABILITY.

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CHILDREN AND BOOKS

Mrs. Conyers Alston.

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FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS

Vol. XXXVII. No. 3.]

[MARCH, 1926.]

ENVIRONMENT IN RELATION TO
NERVOUS STABILITY.*

By the late HELEN WEBB, M.B. (Lond.)

ARE we not all agreed that we are living in a most strenuous age? Must not those of us who are older frequently realize that the calls of to-day on our time and our nerve power are greatly in excess of what were made upon those of our parents? The calmest and best balanced amongst us are aware of an environment which makes it harder to concentrate attention, to work steadily, harder to keep our tempers, more difficult to sleep soundly, and which in every way renders us less placid than were the folk in the time of our grandparents. Life rushes now. It seldom walks or trots quietly. Telephones and motor-cars alone (whether private or public) tend to make people pack their days full to bursting, and many of us find that life demands that, with these aids, we shall get through as much in a day as former generations did in a week.

Now, in such a milieu and with such stress bearing in from outside, does it not behove us to stop and consider not only how we can put up suitable barricades for self-protection, but in what ways we can safeguard and strengthen the rising generation, so that they may present a comparatively calm front to a world of increasing turmoil, and not go under in the conflict? It does not seem as if we could do much to lessen the growth of the general stress, but can we not safeguard the organism exposed to it? Can we not help on that adaptation of the race to environment, which in a longer time

* From the *Parents' Review*, January, 1910.

and in a rougher way is sure to be naturally dealt with by the working of the law of survival of the fittest? May not the members of this Union, toiling early and late for the improvement of the race, set before their minds an ideal of strong, healthy, wise people, who will sometime inhabit the world, and hope that in spite of all difficulties there may again be gods on the earth in future days? If the coming of this ideal is to be expedited, we must keep before us the truth that the child is father of the man, and give the very best possible chance of stability to every human being who is born into the world.

"I doubt," says Max Müller, "whether it is possible to take too high a view of life, where the education of children is concerned. It is the one great work entrusted to us, it forms the true religion of life. Nothing is small or unimportant in forming the next generation, which is to carry on the work where we leave it unfinished. No single soul can be spared—everyone is important, every one may be the cause of infinite good, or of infinite mischief forever hereafter."

I am not, to-day, going to say much about heredity, though it is an important subject closely related to the one before us. A child does well to choose its parents (and still more its stock) wisely, and to bring with it the best of inherited tendencies. Yet the highest authorities on this subject disagree in the very essence of their theories, and we often must gaze with surprise at what, to the man in the street, look like absolute freaks of heredity. We are astonished to see the unsatisfactory children not infrequently produced by fine intellectual parents, and the capable and useful men and women who take their descent from many a silly and incapable father and mother. This is not because the laws of heredity do not work true, but because they are very, very complicated, and our own ignorance is still so great as to their working, that they are bound to surprise us at every turn. Still, as Dr. Clouston truly points out, the intelligent lay public may be pardoned for applying common sense to the subject, and physicians of large practical experience may be forgiven if they adhere to the generally accepted theory that a bad, ill-nourished mother and a drunken father will produce between them a bad progeny, which progeny will again, in spite of favourable environment produce often a very doubtful stock. Certainly from the nutritional point of view heredity tells. "Germ cells require to be nourished

like other cells, and the laws which govern their nutrition cannot be different from those which govern the other cells of the body." Many tendencies, too, are known to run in families, and all agree that above all the type of nervous system tends to reproduce itself. The neurotic is the child of neurotic parents, and those families who have a history of alcoholism, epilepsy or insanity are not those from which we should choose the parents of the race.

It must be kept in mind (again I quote Dr. Clouston) that hereditary defects act as weakness of the defences through which mankind resists disease and death. Physiologists and physicians know that we chiefly die not from disease but because the defences against the innumerable enemies of our lives have become weakened. To over-press or over-educate the brain of a child in whose family insanity or neurasthenia exists may be to diminish its defences and to bring on diseases, which by other modes of education—or want of it—might have been avoided. Though much ignorance accompanies us into our knowledge of the influences of environment, it is not so dense there, and we may feel pretty certain that, other things being equal, the child who has had the wisest treatment according to human knowledge will, in manhood or womanhood, be blessed with more stability than he who, bringing the same heredity with him, is born into a less favourable environment. There are modes of upbringing, of education, and of conduct in life which should be especially avoided where a child is handicapped by a bad heredity. There are special precautions and attentions to physiological law, which would save the minds of many men with a bad heredity from passing into inefficiency and actual disease. While heredity implies a potentiality towards good or evil, it commonly needs a special exciting cause or conjunction of causes to bring out its visible effects. It is a fate which may be averted by knowledge and the practice of law.

The influence of post-natal environment (our subject for to-day) is in all instances incalculably great. That life may be lived bravely and cleanly and the burden of responsibility borne on brave shoulders, the young adult must above all things enter into manhood with a sound and stable nervous system, stable with the stability of true vitality, and sound by association with a pure and healthy body. The good government of a country grows out of the healthy life of the people, and on it again this healthy life depends. In the same manner the

nervous system of a man grows strong and well-balanced through the healthy life of his body, and as by it everything else is governed and controlled its condition tells back for good or evil on all the functions of life.

Whatever a human soul may be, and wherever we come from, we all have to meet life through the instrumentality of a brain and nervous system. While we are in the body it is through these that we must manifest ourselves, and on their health and good working must depend the light in which our personality appears to our fellow-men. If they are sound and robust, if they are a well-tuned instrument of delicacy and power, then can the mind and personality show at its best, and the human being shines among his fellows. If, on the other hand, the brain and nervous system are poor, warped and undeveloped, be the soul behind it what it may, it cannot do itself justice.

Now, the nervous system of a baby at birth is relatively very large and important. The relation of its brain to its body-weight is 1 to 8, while in the adult it is as little as 1 to 40 or 45. The spinal cord at birth is to the body-weight as 1 to 500; in the adult it is 1 to 1,500. In the baby the sense organs have established all their connections with the cortex, that all-important layer of grey matter formed essentially of cells and delicately branching filaments, which covers the surface of the whole organ. The paths are laid down, but not yet in full working order. No new fibres will appear in the nerves of the eye, or the other sense organs, nor will the cells in the cortex, with which these are directly connected, be any further multiplied. And here may I mention that a brain nerve cell with the nerve fibre which takes origin from it is an entity, an individual, which remains for the whole life-time of its owner. There are regiments of them inside our heads, and each one is itself, with its own identity, its phases of fatigue and restoration, ill-health and good health, doing its work properly or scamping it, every day of our lives from birth to death. We must not feel that they are like cells of many simpler organs of the body, which get entirely destroyed in use and pass away to be succeeded by other generations just like themselves. Though the connections of the sense organs with the cortex are complete at birth, the greater part of the nervous system is still very far from having finished its growth. The brain contains a large

amount of quite undeveloped tissue, which gradually spreads out from the developed areas into the surrounding parts, and in regular order the connections of one part with another become developed. As this goes on, the baby's brain doubles its weight in the first year, and at the end of the second year is three times as heavy as at birth. In the first year also it increases its ratio to the body-weight and comes to be 1 to 6, instead of 1 to 8. This rapid growth of the brain (one c.c. per diem during the first year) is the concrete, physical expression of the wonderful unfolding of the human being, which goes on *pari passu* with it and fills with awe, astonishment and reverence all right-thinking people, who are honoured by the acquaintance of a healthy baby.

The relative size of the nervous system in childhood, its immaturity and its quick growth, all explain to the physician much that is important in the nervous diseases of infancy, and ought also to be borne in mind by parents and other guardians of childhood. The higher centres, whose business it will be later on to inhibit and control the lower, are not as yet in existence. Sensitive and excitable nerves connect every part of the body to ignorant and inexperienced centres, and may carry to and from them imperfect and exaggerated impressions. Furthermore, the existing centres are very easily exhausted. This property, which continues through childhood in a decreasing degree, is a point of great practical importance, and ought to be fully realized by all who have to do with the ordering of the lives of children.

From a combination of all these reasons it comes about that in very early life trivial causes may produce profound nervous impressions. For example, what may look like very slight errors of diet, or small excitements, may result in convulsions which endanger the life of the child, or in temperatures of a quite alarming magnitude. Furthermore, for every child who is killed by such an explosion there are certainly not a few whose nervous systems receive twists and injuries which leave behind them life-long effects. Extreme nervousness of many kinds, disorders of sleep, stammering, epilepsy, and even insanity may have had their origin in such reflex nervous influences of malnutrition and other causes. Again, the presence of some physical abnormality, such as adenoids, or eye strain, may, as the child gets older, give rise to a variety of reflex symptoms, or inhibit brain action to a

degree easily realized when removal or relief acts almost magically upon the intelligence and general health.

All the time the brain is growing, relations are being set up with the outer world, through sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste. It is all the time shaping itself to its surroundings. Nothing transpires near it without consciously or unconsciously making some difference to it. All it comes in contact with affects it for good or evil, either directly through the nerves or by its influence on the quality of the blood which circulates through it, and so it is to the end.

Though all young brains are unstable there are some which are sensitive in a special degree. They belong to children of the neurotic type, in whom the emotional element is developed beyond the common. In them the reflexes are especially active, and varieties of nerve explosion occur in response to much slighter stimuli than in the calmer and more phlegmatic. All babies do not have convulsions because they have eaten something indigestible, or because the poison of an infectious fever may have begun to circulate in their blood; but the neurotic infant (who shows often from the first its nervous, emotional temperament) will be especially lucky if it escapes such results. These individuals, growing up from infancy through childhood and adolescence to adult life, stand in special danger, some more and some less, of going down under the stress of modern times. If unfortunate in their environment, not a few find their way to our lunatic asylums; whereas, with the right education and surroundings, they develop into some of the most valuable people who walk the earth.

I have, elsewhere, divided neurotics roughly into two classes: (1) those who are naturally "unprotected," and (2) those who are naturally "protected." Dr. Leonard Guthrie makes a division, which generally speaking coincides in extent with this, into (1) "The unrestrained emotional type," and (2) "The restrained emotional type." In the first class the power of self-control is deficient and feeble; in the latter it becomes abnormally developed. In the first, the personality of the individual is dangerously open to the personal influences of the hour; the latter is hard to move and responds more to principles and theories than to the influence of his fellow-creatures. It is obvious that children of these emotional types most especially call for care in the up-bringing, and that to

fortify them against the pressure of modern times we must strengthen all the defences.

All infants should have peace and quiet, with short alternations of activity; and food absolutely right in quality and quantity (in most cases this, at first, should be mother's milk) given at regular intervals, with proper pauses between for digestion. They need fresh air in abundance, the greatest cleanliness, warmth without heat or stuffiness, supplied by clothes which give comfort and allow the completest freedom. They should be surrounded by cheerfulness to the level of joy, and quiet watchfulness without fuss. These things will all tend to many hours of unbroken sleep.

And here we come to what is of all things most important to the efficiency of the nervous system. Those brain cells which I just now begged you to regard with honour and reverence, and upon whose health before anything else will-power and stability depend, are chiefly recuperated during sleep. During activity their force becomes used up and exhausted. They become clogged with waste products, which make further work impossible until, during sleep, they take up from the blood fresh material and prepare themselves to cope with the demands of the next waking period. Just because in infancy and childhood the brain centres are quickly exhausted, much sleep is needed to ensure their proper working. Of course, food and air to nourish the blood are also important in this connection, but I do not find that it is as necessary to remind people of the latter as of the former. For five mothers who take pains to feed their children as they ought to be fed, there is not more than one (I am putting the average high) who realizes how essential is sleep. Perhaps, five mothers in six recognize that to quite young babies sleep is important, but this only because the babies themselves, when wakeful, resent the insult to their nervous systems, and are therefore apt to disturb the household by their cries. Ideally speaking, an infant during the first few months should sleep all the time that it is not being washed, dressed or fed. As it grows older, the day sleep should be persevered in as long as possible, and early bedtime should be continued long into the teens.

Everyone knows that children need a larger supply of food in proportion to their body-weight than do adults, because

they have not only to keep up condition but have to grow at the same time. So in the case of sleep, more is needed by the young than by the adult, because growth as well as recuperation of nerve is going on, and an extra quantity must be thrown in for the establishment of nervous stability. When people are seriously overworked or overworried, one of the first symptoms is generally loss of sleep, or sleep of an inferior quality. When by excessive hours of work, or anxiety, anyone cuts off his normally needed sleep, the first result on a healthy nervous system is over-powering drowsiness. There are few people who have not at some crisis of life been amazed at the way in which, in spite of trouble and anxiety, they slept. This happens during the time of possible recuperation. If hours of sleep are persistently shortened the power of recovery grows less and less, and with the majority of grown-up people mental worry immediately interferes with both quantity and quality of sleep.

As children get beyond infancy the same general principles should be observed: a sufficiency of good, nourishing, but simple food at regular hours, plenty of fresh air and exercise, and when possible life in the country instead of in town. Do not over-stimulate; do not over-educate; and do not press the brain. See to the removal of all physical disabilities, such as adenoids, enlarged tonsils, errors of refraction in the eyes, defective teeth, etc.; in short, anything which may interfere with brain action or nutrition. There should be plenty of routine and a good deal of what may seem to us grown-up people absolute monotony in the life of a child. The world is to him all new and interesting; there are quantities of thrilling things to be seen and observed and learnt, which to us may have become so familiar as to be nearly non-existent, unless we have children about us to keep us young. Little children ought not to have a chance of becoming *blasé*. Excitement which at all partakes of the nature of grown-up excitement is apt to be harmful, and there is plenty of the kind which they need always at hand in everyday events. There should be abundance of occupation and, especially at first, the more it is of the child's own finding the better. Let us never be in a hurry to supply Paris dolls to such a child as makes an inseparable companion of an old stick with a potato for a head, wrapped up in a discarded garment of its own. Here imagination and ingenuity are at work, and original, in-

dependent action, qualities which should be allowed to exercise themselves and will grow in the using.

One ought to respect the concentration and brown studies of children and not thoughtlessly interrupt serious occupations, the inwardness of which we do not understand. How often a little child, busily engaged in some undertaking, be it a building of bricks or making a mud pie, is suddenly seized upon, bundled up, and hustled off to what the grown-up person is well aware to be the much more important *next thing*. It was not only learning valuable facts of life but practising attention and concentration, and so forming solid habits such as build grit into character. If the *next thing* is *really* important (a walk, or dinner, or something of that kind) give due warning to begin putting up in time, and the child will have another lesson in life, instead of a shock and a jar.

Here we find ourselves in the midst of the question of habit, "That diminutive chain which is scarcely heavy enough to be felt till it is too strong to be broken," as it is described by Dr. Johnson. Few things tend more to nervous stability in later life than the early formation of good and correct habits in small things. The human being who in childhood has learnt to mechanize all the minor details of everyday occurrence has had cleared from his path a mass of obstructive material, and gone far in the work of preparing his brain to endure without injury the worries and burdens of life. Such mechanicalization makes a thousand things easy which would otherwise be difficult. When they are habitual they need no attention, in a word, no brain work, which is an expensive output. The little child for instance who learns what in Devonshire is known as "behaviour" before self-consciousness comes upon him, is saved a multitude of wearing mortifications and difficulties as he grows bigger, and can enjoy the interests around him instead of undergoing much real distress.

More than this, routine and repetition of actions which go to form habits has a specific steadying effect upon the nervous system. It increases co-ordination, improves its tone and gives poise. It is obvious that too much habit, the *making habitual things which ought to be left to choice and attention*, tends to give an excessive degree of a wrong kind of stability, lessens spontaneity and renders the individual unfit to cope with the new conditions which meet him in the varied calls of life. The man who has gone in one narrow round all his life,

simply repeating without thought the same daily routine actions, may become in one sense so stable that nothing moves and nothing interests him. He is a mere machine. He acquires a stability which may be compared to that of a cube on a table. What we aim at, on the other hand, for the healthy brain of a living soul is the stability which means equal poise.

Amongst those to be cultivated are many negative habits. By this, I mean, that those in charge of children should do all in their power to see that habits of mind and body detrimental to health and sanity are *not* formed. As an example of this, take the habit of screaming fits, not at all rare in emotional children. Such fits are terribly exhausting at the time, and are apt to result in more or less permanent weakening of the defences. Though the permanent injury may be like that of the breaking of Sir W. Scott's heart, so well mended that one cannot find the scar, it is there nevertheless. For the young infant a certain amount of use of its lungs is normal and wholesome. It will cry when it is hungry, and from time to time express its disapproval of various experiences which it would prefer left alone. It will cry with pain, and it is well we should know about a pin or a stomach ache. No trouble should be spared to find the cause of such crying, if doubtful, but with its removal and the consequent relief from annoyance or suffering the baby at once calms down and becomes happy again. Not so with the crying fits of the over-emotional infant. They are more like the hysterics of an adult, and tend to repeat and prolong themselves, if timely efforts are not successful in putting a stop to the habit. If taken at the very beginning, change of thought wisely applied at each attempt at recurrence will often be successful, but when once the habit is established the problem becomes much more difficult. When children waken out of sleep with such screaming it is often the result of some dream, the memory of which goes on terrifying the child, who cannot have the relief of explaining its trouble to those around it.

Closely allied to habit and most influential in the production of good nerve balance are all those muscular actions which necessitate precision. Every action which any group of muscles learns to do skilfully goes towards the increase of co-ordination in the brain and establishes a healthier state. Physical exercises which are accurately performed and learnt with real attention, not only strengthen the muscles, and

improve the carriage, cause deep breathing and consequent increase in the amount of oxygen which enters the blood, but they also cultivate those portions of the brain which are used in their performance and establish the co-ordination of one part with another. Fencing and certain other exercises of balance and precision have this effect in a particularly high degree. All delicate handicrafts in which interest is awakened, and accuracy sought after, are very instrumental in increasing co-ordination and balance of brain action.

No child should begin regular lessons very early, much less so the neurotic child. Up to five years old it is, as a rule, much more wholesomely occupied with *things* than with books, and even then great care must be taken that the mental food supplied is not in excess of the appetite which demands it. Information will do no harm if it is really sought for and desired.

Close observation of small objects such as are necessitated by attempts to learn to read, to sew, or to thread small beads, have a definitely injurious effect upon the eyes of young children. They modify the vision injuriously and not infrequently set up errors of refraction which continue through life. It may be long before those defects are found out and remedied by proper glasses, and in the meantime they are telling back injuriously on the general health of the child, and putting him at a disadvantage among his fellows. The anxiety of mere babies to learn is a desire best satisfied by reading to them and telling them stories and facts of interest which gratify the mental appetite and enlarge the child's horizon without doing it physical injury.

Training with young children should for the most part take the place of teaching, and in forming all the good habits to which I have referred they will of necessity receive many new ideas. It is delightful to learn to help nurse or mother in all kinds of little ways which teach deftness and tidiness, and one thousand other useful habits. To put away one's toys nicely, fetch and carry, and give messages accurately all forms the most valuable kind of education at this time of life.

Everything around him is entering into every fibre of a child, and each day he adds to his knowledge of the common things of the world. What a multitude they are, and what a full life he lives as he realizes them in those early years!

Hear how Walt Whitman puts it, with an older child in mind :—

" There was a child went forth every day,
And the first object he looked upon, that object he became,
And that object became part of him for the day or a certain part of
the day.
Or for many years or stretching cycles of years.
The early lilacs became part of the child,
The grass and white and red morning-glories, and white and red
clover, and the song of the phoebe-bird,
And the Third-Month lambs and the sow's faint pink litter and the
mare's foal and the cow's calf,
And the noisy brood of the hen-yard, or by the mire of the pond side,
And the fish suspending themselves so curiously below there, in the
beautiful curious liquid,
And the water-plants with their graceful flat heads, all became part
of him.

* * * * *

His own parents, he that had father'd him, and she that had
conceived him in her womb and birthed him,
They gave this child more of themselves than that.
They gave him afterwards, every day they became part of him.
The mother at home, quietly placing the dishes on the supper table,
The mother with mild words, clean, her cap and gown, a wholesome
odour falling off her person and her clothes as she walks by,
The father strong, self-sufficient, manly, mean, anger'd, unjust,
The blow, the quick loud word, the tight bargain, the crafty lure,
The family usages, the language, the company, the furniture, the
yearning and swelling heart,
Affection that will not be gainsay'd.

* * * * *

These became part of that child, who went forth every day, and who
now goes and will always go forth every day."

The higher functions of the emotional child ought to be
retarded rather than stimulated. Ultimately, they will be
all the stronger and healthier for such treatment. No parent
ought to be beguiled by the early quickness of the unprotected,
excitable child into letting him be pressed forward or even
allowed to work up to his apparent powers. Especially, if the
heredity is bad, this very precocity may even be a danger signal.

Of the highest moment, in establishing a right rhythm of
life, are the moral, social and religious surroundings to which
the individual is subjected. First of these as to time, and
perhaps also in importance, come the parents themselves,
their relations towards each other, their religious outlook, and
the general tone of the home. In the earlier part of this paper
I quoted the saying, that children should be careful in the
choice of their parents. May I now say that the parents
should be very careful in their choice of each other. The
more neurotic are they, the more careful should this choice be.

One dwells on this because peace in the home and loyalty of
one parent to the other, in every department of life, as well
as in direct relation to their children, is an element of the
atmosphere which cannot be over-estimated. The absence of
what some one has called the *psychological unit* in the relation
of father and mother is among the most disastrous calamities
which can befall a young family. It is best that the parents
should in all things see eye to eye, but for them not to be quite
loyal to each other and not each uphold the authority of the
other is a nervous strain which falls with intolerable weight on
sensitive and emotional children. We often say that the first
principle in the inculcation of obedience is that children should
feel that we ourselves are obedient to a higher law. In the
same way, they become loyal by recognizing loyalty between
those dear to them. If the father and mother have to settle
some question on which they cannot at first agree, let the
understanding be come to behind closed doors and not in the
presence of the children. The young and emotional need
round them the peaceful moral atmosphere which this ensures.

In a charming book probably known to some here, *The
Young People by one of the Old People*, the question is touched
upon most delicately: " Father and mother work for love
of the young people, and the young people watch and share
the work, and lighten it and give it the touch of comedy. They
are delightful. ' I wish,' said one of them, ' that we had a
little more money: I don't mean much more. I don't want
to alter the way we are doing things now. I know mother is
awfully good—you know you are, mother—and father is
awfully clever—of course you are, father. I only mean we
could do such a lot of awfully jolly things, I don't mean only
for ourselves.' But it was the way she said it, with a laugh
and a nod to me, and a hand given to father, and a hand given
to mother. She made us all sure we had all we wanted. She
had seen that father was in one of his moods, and in immediate
need of that assurance, and the young people are wonderfully
loyal to father. This loyalty which is a good instance of the
divine management of human affairs is hard to define. It is
neither pride, nor instinct, nor a sense of duty, nor ignorance
of the facts of the case, nor a natural desire to make the best
of them. I can only say that it would not be there if father
and mother did not deserve it should be there. They get it
to grow and flower and be in flower like the gorse all the year

round. Out of the nettles of criticism they pluck the flower of loyalty. I think well of the nettles and not ill, and would not have them away. The young person who never judges his or her parents will always be misjudging them; and if I were in want of children of my own I would as soon adopt a gramophone as have such a child. This home-grown flower, the young people's loyalty, which we used to call filial piety, is very fastidious in its choice of a soil, and very sensitive to changes in the atmosphere of the home. I have observed it closed and drooping in the afternoon, because father at lunch-time had said to mother, 'I wish to goodness you would not do that!' but by dinner time it was as fresh as ever, and father gathered some which mother wore all the evening."

Whatever be the creed of the parents, it is good for the children that, while firmly and reverently held, it is imbued with a wide tolerance for the views of others. How many young people have met with moral shipwreck simply as the result of a too narrow and rigid a religious atmosphere in the home, which drove them to the other extreme.

Religious instruction should be given reverently, in peaceful surroundings, not hurried through or conducted at a time subject to interruption. It is well that the children should associate this teaching with moments of confidence, when they can open their hearts quietly to their mother, and have an opportunity for discussing with her problems and difficulties of any kind which happen to be engaging their attention.

The making of friends (one of the most momentous influences of life) is an especially serious matter in the case of young people of the un-restrained emotional type. For this reason it behoves parents to exercise all possible care as to those with whom their children associate. It is generally impossible to choose the individual friends, for the growth of a real friendship is a personal matter—a kind of fate which comes to each human soul—and depends on lines of character and attraction which no outsider can judge—and in this sense a father or mother is an outsider. Parents, however, can by the choice of schools, and of the families with whom they associate do much to see that their children are brought into contact, for the most part, with those who are worthy of choice. They can spread the table, though each child for himself must select his individual food. Indeed, by the time the chief friendship of life, to say nothing of closer bonds, come to be made character is so

formed and the lines of cleavage in the individuality so established that our children have passed beyond the region to which this paper chiefly refers.

There is literally no end to this subject, from any side, be it fact, theory, or speculation, and I have only touched on a few points. Let me close with another quotation, this time from that book which may be regarded almost as a bible for those who want to do the very best for the neurotic child, Wordsworth's *Prelude*:

" How much is overlooked
In human nature and her subtle ways,
As studied first in our own hearts, and then
In life among the passions of mankind,
Varying their composition and their hue,
Where'er we move, under the divers shapes
That individual character presents
To an attentive eye. For progress meet,
Along this intricate and difficult path,
Whate'er was wanting, something had I gained,
As one of many schoolfellows compelled,
In hardy independence, to stand up
Amid conflicting interests, and the shock
Of various tempers; to endure and note
What was not understood, though known to be;
Among the mysteries of love and hate,
Honour and shame, looking to right and left,
Unchecked by innocence too delicate,
And moral notions too intolerant,
Sympathies too contracted. Hence, when called
To take a station among men, the step
Was easier, the transition more secure,
More profitable also; for the mind
Learns from such timely exercise to keep
In wholesome separation the two natures,
The one that feels, the other that observes."

In Memoriam.

HELEN WEBB.

"Blessed are they who have been my friends."

I.

OUT of the grief which overwhelms us at the loss of a dear friend, there comes the joy and privilege of singing the praises of one whom one has loved. To know Dr. Webb, was to love her. Let me try to describe her appearance and mind. During her later years she was afflicted with an ailing body but she never complained, for fortitude and unconquerable *joie de vivre* did not depend on her body. I don't think, except upon solemn occasions, I ever saw her face without a smile. She seemed to radiate joy and brightness.

A visitor at our house, where "Wai," as we, from our earliest childhood, have called Dr. Webb, stayed every year, said she reminded him of the little old woman in the fairy stories, and it is true that she took a fairy-like delight in all the countless little beautiful things as well as the great ones. Her mind was a storehouse of knowledge, and not only was she informed upon almost any conceivable subject,—not only did she "know how to do" almost everything, and be ready to show one the right way; but also she was wise beyond fathoming. Her counsel was always invaluable. On every aspect of morality and ethics she had a wise and true word to say. She had the power of smoothing over all our difficulties. Amongst her most precious gifts was her power to bring out the best in others. However lazy or selfish one was feeling there was nothing one could do for her that was anything but a joy and a desired thing. We never asked "why?" That was the sort of person she was.

"Wai's" sense of humour was a never extinguished fire. At the most trying moments, she would set us all laughing by a little turn of phrase, or a bit of inimitable Irish brogue, that would change the whole situation. She had at her command,

an inexhaustable fund of stories, quaint phrases, limericks, or proverbs, such a phrase as "making manure of the Devil," when one made the best of a bad job, or, as I remember an instance, when one turns a tear in a piece of embroidery into a bud in the design,—or such an injunction, as "Git, all ye who have no shirts on, git," which sent us scurrying to do the errand we were sent upon, are particularly delightful.

She loved a witty story, and she saw more real fun in life than anyone else I have known.

Her hands were a perpetual marvel. There seemed nothing "Wai" could not make. Her embroidery, which she did at incredible speed, was of exquisite quality. She knew all the old-fashioned and rare stitches, and was a real artist in her contour and design. Like William Morris, she was not content however, to create mere ornament. She used her skill in needlework to beautify things of everyday life, and with extreme love of detail she made the most varied objects, for example a tea cosy, a book cover, or a cross-stitch stool-cover, things at once beautiful and useful.

She could make things too, out of almost nothing, out of match boxes, or hairpins, carve a head in an orange, or make exquisite bee hives with the pith of a rush, bound round an egg shell. She had a spinning wheel, and spun her own yarn—writing to me with great glee, that she had bought a whole sheep's skin in a market. She taught us how to make frogs and ladders, cocks and wheelbarrows out of paper. She was never stumped. Her ingenuity never failed. We were to perform a scene from "Madam Butterfly" in a local hall,—and were at a loss to know how to represent cherry blossom. It was, of course, "Wai," who solved our difficulty, by herself sewing on countless silk blossoms to beech twigs, and at another time she made a dress for a play out of leaves sewn upon cotton threads. She could mend a tear invisibly. "Let me mend that so it won't show," she would say, and it would be done. She always put little bits away, often bringing them out years afterwards and making use of them. She was as clever with her crochet hook, or her knitting needles as she was with her needle. I have by me also a dear little kingfisher "Wai" carved with a penknife. And "Wai" was a marvellous cook. Not only have we a hundred or more recipes that she gave us, but she herself made the most delicious cakes and potato-cakes.

She was too, a great maker of plans. She had the power of

visualising what a thing would be like when it was finished—which is denied to most of us. This is perhaps what made her gardening as wonderful as it was, apart from her love of flowers, she had a way with them which made her succeed where others fail. I remember her building our rockery. Every stone she would direct to be put "just right," and gradually the whole would take a shape under her guidance. The gardeners often thought her quite wrong, but she was always right. The workmen adored her. She planned our lodge too, and a large part of her own house at Welwyn Garden City was designed by her. What a really great gardener she was is shown by the fact that she had crops of vegetables from her garden well before the house was finished. So well did she draw a plan, and so methodical was she, that she used to run our garden in Ireland from her own house in England, by means of duplicate maps of the beds, one of which she gave to the gardener, sending him word when it was time to put in a plant in "Bed C in the Bog Garden," and so forth. With her constant planning, too, "Wai" has left many places the better for her passing through them. At Spout Farm (for many years her beautiful Tudor home in Rotherfield), at Brighton, whither she moved after the terrible blow of her sister's death had fallen on her (her manner of bearing this tragic loss is a consolation and help to us who now have lost her), and finally at Welwyn she left behind her the mark of the exquisite touch of her hands. Indeed, she said herself, that the excuse for building a house at seventy was that there was at least one place more of beauty left to those who come after her. It seems very hard that she was allowed so short a time to enjoy the new home at Welwyn that had taken so much care and joy to build.

When one went to see "Wai" in her own home, the whole house seemed full of her presence. She seemed to set the very air aglow with her personality. I felt with her none of the awkwardness that is felt between youth and age, she was in sympathy with one's every mood, one felt the better for having been with her.

Miss Mason, whose life, by her advice and skill as a doctor, Miss Webb lengthened by many years, in fact enabling her to see the fulfilment of some of her greatest hopes, called her the "Beloved Physician." But "Wai" was not only the physician of the body but also of the soul. Her advice and care has saved many lives. My mother's and my own amongst them. She

was among the first to advocate open windows, cold baths, and the sleeping of children out of doors. And for the soul she had equally good counsel. "If you mean to do a thing in the end, don't argue about it first, just do it," was one of her favourite sayings,—but all who came in contact with her will remember some such advice that she gave them.

She was as well informed on subjects of current interest as she was on history and literature, showing great interest in politics and modern discoveries in science and medicine. She was wonderfully well read, and had a beautiful voice, so that to listen to her reading was a great joy. She read *Uncle Remus* inimitably, and all who heard her reading the Irish stories of Peadraig Pearce, or Jane Barlow, or the poems of Winifred Letts, will never forget it. And, withal, the humility of her soul was an inspiration.

"Wai" had a genius for names: she would give names to the objects about her house, or her garden, and several institutions owe their names to her.

I will close by saying one word about her funeral.

"Wai" died as she would have wished to die. Much as she loved this world, and no one loved it more, she was I believe ready when she was called. With all her faculties, how merciful it was for one so full of mental activity, that a period of senility was spared her,—dignified and serene, this great soul passed from our world. With a dignity and a serenity that is acquired only by living in holiness and by service, quietly with those she most desired around her, she fell asleep. And we bade her farewell in a place that radiated her sort of peace. The birds and the woods and the flowers she so loved surround her. In the corner of a green slope at the Friends' Meeting House at Jordans, we gathered to pay her homage. About sixty people were there, one friend of the age of ninety, one of twenty. On her coffin lay a beautiful wreath from St. Paul's Girls' School, of which, from the foundation until two years ago, Dr. Webb had been the Medical Consultant, a wreath from Scale How, made from the mosses and lichens and wild flowers, which "Wai" loved so dearly, and some snowdrops that had grown in her own garden, as if on purpose, during the few days since her death.

Few of us could speak for our hearts were full as we stood by her grave. Miss Gardiner quietly recited "O God our help in ages past," and we turned and went into the old Meeting

House. There, one whom it was "Wai's" especial desire should speak at this time, Miss Lily Montagu rose, and quietly, simply, beautifully gave our thoughts words. She said:—

"The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no evil shall touch them. In the eyes of the simple they seem to have died, and their departure is accounted to be their hurt. But they are in peace, and their hope is full of immortality. Having borne a little chastening, they shall receive great good; for God has made trial of them, and found them worthy of Himself.

"As we stand here in the presence of God, we think of our dear friend Helen Webb with love and reverence. We think of her wisdom, of her life of great service. We think of her genius for friendship; how she gently untied the knots when they appeared in our lives and we went to her for advice. Indeed, we think of her as a great healer. We think of her devotion to truth which showed itself in her accuracy in judgment, and in her methods of education. We think of her sense of fun; of her love for little children; of her tenderness and charity in her relations with young and old.

"Her appreciation for beauty showed itself in the creations of her hands, and in her home and garden. We think of her living faith, which was expressed in the orderliness of her life. She trusted infinitely and loved deeply.

"We think of her courage in bearing physical pain and discomfort. Above all, we think of her great serenity. She had something of the peace of God in her heart, but it was not the peace of inactivity. She fought against evil, because of the great peace which was in her life. Because God is, she believed in perfect love and she worked with God and for God.

"Oh God of love and life, oh God, Who hast put eternity in our hearts, oh God with Whom there is no death, we commit our dear friend to Thee. They who love her most miss her most; but they remember what courage she showed when her dear ones were taken from her side. Teach us to number our days and to live a little better and to love a little more because she lived and loved.

"In Thy peace we find peace. In Thy hands are the souls of the living and the dead. In Thine everlasting arms we rest, with our beloved.

"Let Thy peace be upon us Oh Lord, for our hope is in Thee.

"He hath swallowed up death for ever; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the reproach of His people shall be taken away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it. Sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

* * * * *

The last thing I saw was a dear old sexton, like a Millias' picture, quietly filling in her grave—the end she would have wanted. And so we went forth into the world rejoicing in her memory.

Immortality has two forms, one in Heaven, and the other on Earth. Of the immortality which is the remaining in the minds of those who are left behind, and actively working therein for good, Helen Webb has a full measure. We, who have known her, are the better for her life.

We praise God for her great and lovely soul.

Blessed, indeed, are those who have been her friends.

MICHAEL FRANKLIN.

II.

THE P.N.E.U. has sustained a great loss in the death on January 29th, of Dr. Helen Webb. She was greatly beloved by members of the P.N.E.U. Executive Committee and of the Ambleside Council, who knew her intimately, while others felt that there was always present in her a wise counsellor whose spiritual strength, wide knowledge and sense of humour made her help in discussion of rare value. Her practice as a physician and surgeon brought her into touch with all classes, and school-girl and student, hospital patient and friend, had in her not only a skilled practitioner in the major ills, but one whose knowledge of detail and love of the little joys of life could bring ease and pleasure to mind when "brother body" was hard to put up with.

Dr. Webb was one of the oldest friends of our dear Founder, Miss Charlotte Mason. She was a member of the original Council of the P.N.E.U. and was already lecturing for the Union in 1891. Her first lecture on "The Making, Storing and Distributing of Nerve Force," in February, 1891, was given in Hampstead, and was followed by one at Reading, in December of the same year, on "The Formation of Habit." From then onwards few years passed without lectures from her, at various branches, most of which appeared in the *Parents' Review*, and have since done valuable propaganda work in pamphlet form.

Her last public P.N.E.U. speech was a talk at Wembley at the P.U.S. Children's Gathering, when Dr. Webb spoke to the children about Miss Mason and her work for them. Dr. Webb frequently visited Scale How, and in 1894 spent some days in helping to discuss all the pros and cons of taking this house for the College.

When Miss Mason was seriously ill in 1899, and the only hope seemed an immediate course of treatment in Germany, it was Dr. Webb who made the journey possible by thinking out all the thousand and one little ways in which the risks of a journey might be minimised, and by sending a doctor friend the whole way to show how they should be carried out. This first journey made possible the other, often anxious, journeys which succeeded for fifteen years, for to the treatment at Bad Nauheim Miss Mason felt she owed many years of life.

There are few of Miss Webb's friends who will not call to mind her interpretative reading, or a dainty bit of needlework with some quite original purpose or design, in those beautiful

little hands, or her clever pencil with a plan, or her care for some cherished plant or flower. Her sense of fun, her store of anecdotes, told with racy Irish wit, never failed, nor her always present sense of spiritual values.

It seems most fitting to bear record to her wise teaching by republishing a very characteristic lecture.—E.K.

III.

In addition to being Miss Mason's friend, Dr. Helen Webb was for nearly thirty years the closest friend of our Honorary Secretary, Mrs. Franklin, and of her children. She spent every summer holiday with them, and helped them all with skill and wisdom, in sickness and health, in joy and sorrow. It was a unique friendship, a daily written or spoken word, and Mrs. Franklin writes: "I always feel that anything I have been able to do for others, and especially any understanding I may have of human nature and the way the mind works, comes from those two friends, Miss Mason and Dr. Webb, whom God in His goodness sent me." Mrs. Franklin also feels that she owed to the P.N.E.U. her friendship with Dr. Webb whom she first met at a course of lectures given to the Belgravia Branch in 1896.

We of the P.N.E.U. have a special indirect reason for gratitude to "B.P." (as Miss Mason called her—the "Beloved Physician"), as it was she who persuaded our Honorary Secretary to submit to an operation which saved her life and preserved her for the work she has been able to do.

Those who heard Miss Webb's contributory discussion after lectures will know what is meant by her "wisdom" and her "understanding of human nature."

MRS. FRANKLIN'S SOUTH AFRICAN TOUR: DIARY, PART II.

By MRS. GOULD.

[Continued from page 88.]

PRETORIA.

IMMEDIATELY on arrival we changed, and Miss Le Roux and I (who live in North Lodge, across the garden), sallied forth to dine with Miss MacWilliam, Mrs. Franklin, Mrs. Wagner (our Organiser), Mr. Scott (Director of Education), Mr. Hofmeyer (Administrator of the Transvaal, who finances the Government Schools). They will both be at the public meeting on Wednesday evening. The talk was partly on P.N.E.U. and some spade-work was done by us both.

On Tuesday we went over a diamond mine. The chiefly interesting thing was to see the great pit dug out of the ground, with lines laid and cocopans (trolleys) running perpetually. They blast four times a day and we saw the 12 o'clock blasting, when they fired 2,500 trains of fuse that had been laid only six feet below the surface. All diamond digging is open-air work. It was wonderful to hear all these explosions, and to see the rocky surface ground broken up and flung into the air and clouds of smoke and dust. All the time a bell rings to warn the natives to keep well out of range, and those who light the fuses are given three minutes to get under ground into a small cave or tunnel. The pit we saw was 400 feet below the natural surface, i.e., the ground we stood on.

We lunched at the Mines Club, with some twenty ladies, all interested in the N.C.W. and education. Across the table there was P.N.E.U. talk, until Mrs. Franklin feared to forestall the interest of her lecture to take place in the afternoon. We returned by 3 o'clock, and at 4 p.m., some 150 people assembled to tea in the garden, and were afterwards joined by 300 more in the hall of the School Building. Mrs. Franklin spoke chiefly on P.N.E.U., touching on the School, and appealed at the end to the audience to form a Branch then and there—which was done on the motion of Miss MacWilliam. Thirty-five members were enrolled.

On Wednesday, we had a very interesting morning visiting native schools, and after that Mrs. Franklin was entertained at lunch at the beautiful Country Club by the Committee and members of the Women's Reform Club. The table was decorated with yellow arum lilies and blue delphiniums, and the view from the Club was beautiful in the extreme. Miss Talbot welcomed Mrs. Franklin, who spoke on the N.C.W., and persuaded the Reform Club to become a Branch of the N.C.W. of the Union.

At the evening public meeting at Pretoria, a very large audience assembled. The Bishop, Dr. Neville Talbot, was in the chair, and Mr. Hofmeyer, the Administrator, was also on the platform; and Mr. Scott, the Director of Education. Although there was no available space for literature, the caretaker helped gallantly and we fetched tables and made a very good spread in the end. There was a great deal of interest, and the paramount thing of importance was that Mr. Bryant, Director of Natal, who had regretted his absence from Maritzburg when we were there, came to this Transvaal meeting, and made himself known to Mrs. Franklin. He definitely considered that there were two schools he might ask to consider trying P.U.S. work. Mr. Hofmeyer made a good speech though short, in which he summarised the four outstanding merits of our method. More members joined the Branch of the P.N.E.U., and round the literature table we came across Miss Frogley, one of the first five elementary school teachers to teach on our method in Gloucestershire. She is now teaching in the Diocesan School for Girls in Pretoria. A great deal of literature was sold. At the close of the meeting we deposited our box at a hotel where Mrs. Franklin was to speak next day to young mothers at 10.30, after addressing the girls of the High School at 8.30.

The morning meeting was very well attended, seventy present, Miss Talbot in the chair. We were charmed to see there G—— S——, a child of twelve, from Miss Goode's School, Burgess Hill, who is travelling with her parents, but working by herself from 9 to 1 every day and taking the exams., so that she will have lost nothing when she goes back to England shortly. She only just came to see us. Of course, she was greatly thrilled to see the Nature Note Book of E.T., whom she knows at School. This evidence of one side of the P.U.S. greatly impressed the audience, most of whom had noticed her

awaiting Mrs. Franklin's coming. We had heard of her excellent essay written for the Guide Captain at the High School, whose Company she had joined temporarily. At this meeting more people joined as members and for the school. It was 1 o'clock before the last questioner went, and I could pack up the book box. People have been tremendously kind in lending us motors.

After lunch people who could not manage to be present, came to the Girls' High School where we were staying, and it was a busy time until we left for the Station at 4.30 for Bulawayo, via Plumtree, where there is a big boys' school. Here we broke our journey, arriving at 4.30 in the morning. Mr. Hammond, the Headmaster, met us in the grey dawn and conducted us to the house about fifteen minutes from the station. We found their private house consisted of a number of Rondarvels, round mud or brick huts with thatched roofs. We had one for our bedroom, but following the custom of the place, our beds were taken out for us at night, and we spent a wonderful night under the stars. We shall never forget the African night—moon and stars and a deep blue sky.

Though it seemed at first as if we might not do much here for the spread of P.U.S. work, it turned out well, for Mr. Hammond was much interested to get the village school to work P.U.S. under the existing teacher, who was teaching at Lynams at Oxford during the war, and had charge there of a junior house. It is an exceptional position, for farm or village schools have not usually a teacher with so much experience, and Mr. Hammond hopes to co-operate with her in starting a Junior School to feed his Senior School, which at present only takes boys at eleven years of age.

We had a long talk with Mrs. Cowling, head of the Junior School, who teaches the boys who come at eleven. She seriously considered the experiment of spending the time on P.U.S. work in that class, even though at present she feels that the boys come to school so backward that no time must be spent on anything but slog, slog, slog, at the three Rs. Mrs. Franklin emphasised the point that Mr. Hammond might get the boys better prepared if only they did P.U.S. work in their homes before they came to him, and asked him to tell the parents who wrote to him about vacancies for their boys, about the P.N.E.U.

BULAWAYO.

We arrived here on Sunday evening on a goods train, which started at 7.0 p.m. instead of at 3.30, and reached Bulawayo at 10.45. It was very hot indeed, but the scenery different to what we had yet seen, and the most wonderful sunset.

On Monday we had a whole holiday (or rather I did, for Mrs. Franklin addressed the Jewish community in the evening), and we spent it in going to Matopos to see Rhodes' grave. It is wonderfully impressive; a plain bronze slab laid on a flat piece of stone, with the words, "Here lie the remains of Cecil John Rhodes." The position is known as The World's View, a native name given to express the vast space that is overlooked, and the chaotic newly-born appearance of the landscape; great outcrops of rock amongst the dense vegetation, which give one furiously to think of the world before men were. On the summit of the hill where Rhodes' grave is made are enormous boulders covered with brilliant lichens, yellow, red—or rather rust colour—and bright green. I shall never forget the impression. I ought to note that Mrs. Franklin also went up to the very top of the hill—three-quarters of a mile—taking forty minutes each way, and some parts were difficult going. The temperature was 106 degrees, but a fair breeze as we got higher. She felt this exertion was eminently worth while.

On Tuesday Mrs. Fripp, B.A., Oxon, a long-standing P.N.E.U. member, arrived to breakfast and stayed in the house, having come many miles. Had she not been lucky enough to be motored in, she would have come by bullock waggon and had one "outspan" or rest and unharnessing on the way. She is, and has been for three years, teaching her boy who is now fourteen, in the P.U.S. He is to enter the Native Department, and is also learning native languages—two of them to start with. He will matriculate before long.

Some people came to morning tea—familiarily called "tea" at which our minds spring to 4.30 o'clock. On one day in this country one is liable to be offered tea nine times. *Very* rarely, and then only at home, is a cold drink offered instead. Mrs. Linnell also came to tea. She is a sister to Miss Hadfield, of Maidenhead (P.U.S. School), and has step-children (besides her own two-year-old), whom she is teaching herself in Class III. in the P.U.S.

Mrs. Russell, wife of Judge Russell, with three children at school in Bulawayo, came to meet Mrs. Franklin before the afternoon meeting, to be held in her drawing-room. There were seventy people present on this occasion; a number of young mothers and some teachers. It was arranged that there should be a demonstration lesson the following morning at St. Peter's School, kept by the sisterhood which is a branch of the Grahamstown sisterhood. The Mother Superior and a Sister were both present, and on the occasion of the lesson we saw the Sister who is in charge of the younger children. She was very much interested and appreciative, with real understanding. We found many mothers of the day before. Two lessons were given. We also saw a child now at the school who would like to go to Ambleside when she is eighteen, and whom St. Peter's would be delighted to welcome back on the staff.

In the afternoon people came to tea, including Mrs. Hartley, sister of Mrs. Duckham, mother of my last pupil, who has been eighteen months at Bulawayo, but is shortly going to live twenty-five miles from Salisbury. She hopes very much to start a class amongst the settlers' families there, of which hers is one. She was obliged to wait until she could hear again from two especial families she already knows, who would share expenses with her apart from other probable support. Mrs. Varvill, our hostess, at present teaching her own little boys (five and eight), also thinks it possible she may require a student and gather a class round her own children and Mrs. Linnell's. Altogether very great interest was shown.

In the evening Mrs. Franklin addressed a public meeting, organised by the Scientific Association (Secretary, Mr. Niven). Eighty-nine people were present, where usually thirty is the muster. By a stroke of good luck the Director of Education, living at Salisbury, was in Bulawayo, and came of his own accord to the meeting. Mr. Niven asked him to speak after the address. I mentioned Miss Field, of Plumtree Farm School to him, saying how this method had interested her, and he agreed that it would be a great service "in such cases." A meeting was held at the chief boys' school, and Mr. Robinson, the acting Principal, and some of the staff were present, and took some of our literature.

The Evelyn Girls' School wanted to see a demonstration lesson, but Mrs. Franklin did not think it a good thing to give

one as none of the staff nor the Principal had attended the lectures.

On Thursday we left Bulawayo at 1 o'clock. Mrs. Cator came to tea at 11.0, to hear more about Ambleside. Mrs. Cator had heard Mrs. Franklin speak at Maidenhead. Also Mr. Munn, the Presbyterian minister, came to settle the details of the Branch to be formed here, of which he is to be Treasurer; and Mrs. Fripp and Mrs. Varvill, Joint Secretaries. This Branch starts with about twenty members, and much interest. (We now have news of the first Branch Meeting, at which Mr. Munn read "Children are Born Persons.")

On boarding the train, letters followed us of very great interest. One from Miss Lawrence, of Roedean, Johannesburg, desiring to join the P.U.S. for her Junior School, to start in January. One from Miss Kemp, of Harrismith, for the same purpose. We feel very glad indeed that Miss Kemp is staying on at Harrismith, as when we were there the issue hung in the balance. It is probable that the interest aroused by Mrs. Franklin's visit has made the neighbourhood rally to Miss Kemp's support. Miss Kemp starts entirely at her own risk, and in pursuance of her high ideals for children and their education. I had the great pleasure of staying with her at Oaklands (the school buildings), and so I feel I truly know. I very much hope success will reward her in this venture. She is willing to accept financial loss which is an unusual form of idealism.

Regarding both these Schools, Roedean and Harrismith (or Oaklands), I am going to obtain from people at Bulawayo copies of next term's programmes for Classes I., II. and III., so that they may waste no time in sending their book orders to the office.

LIVINGSTONE.

Here we had a delightful stay at Government House, through the kindness of Sir Herbert and Lady Stanley, who arranged for us to visit the Falls more than once. The Falls *cannot* be really described in this Diary. We saw them at all points, as well as the Zambezi where it is a mile wide, and it was quite a surprise to us who had thought that any African river was apt to be a disappointment. The saying is that when you fall into an African river you get up and dust yourself.

The Falls are entirely unspoilt by notices and "view points," so labelled. On the way from Bulawayo one begins to get

"that Livingstone feeling"—it is so sandy and jungly; quite different to what we have seen before. But I am *not* going to enter upon description. It is a wonderfully beautiful thing—not only the Falls, but the approach—a placid shining piece of water with rocks and islands out-cropping—also the outlet, a dark *deep* and deeply green pool, where the water seems to stand still until you notice where it slips over in a smooth mass like a moving piece of malachite between high cliffs. The Fall itself where it foams and cascades is four hundred feet and more, and the spray leaps even higher into the air again or seems to. There is the appearance of dense mist over the cliff. We have not seen the Rain Forest, but go to-day.

We had a very successful meeting on Saturday afternoon, on Lady Stanley's verandah. About thirty people present. Mr. Clark, Director of Education, whom we had met the night before at dinner was present. A lesson was asked for to be given on Monday morning before we left. Lady Stanley is going to follow up the meeting by a tea party on her return from the Cape, where she goes for two weeks, and a Branch will probably be formed. We took seven names for membership at once. Sir Herbert Stanley is considering a boarding-school on P.U.S. lines for Livingstone. He is keenly interested. It is also likely that Lady Stanley may have a P.U.S. class for her own children. In both cases a "student" would be needed. She is visiting England next year, and would hope to see candidates for her own private post.

The lesson on Monday morning was well attended. Mr. Clark took great interest. Mr. Taggart (Native Education Department), was also there; and the Governor is writing to Mr. Latham, the Head of that Department to be sure to visit the Office before he returns to Africa.

We visited the Falls again on Sunday, late afternoon, and had a perfectly wonderful time seeing every aspect in addition to our Friday visit. Then it was dull and grey—on Sunday it was brilliant. The Falls were not full, but by all accounts it was better so, though spoken of as a pity, for we got a far more contrast of colour and contour than if it had been a continuous sheet of "the smoke that thunders" as the natives call it, when nothing but spray is to be seen. The sunset was the finest we had either of us ever seen, and the silver moon, full and rising through the flame glow reflected from the West, into a pure pale blue against the foaming falls, was a never to

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be forgotten sight. After dinner Lady Stanley drove us down
for a third visit by moonlight : a dream of beauty !
to Bulawayo where we stayed a day, en route

On our return to Bulawayo where we stayed a day, en route to the Cape, where we are to stay ten days—a record visit—we met at lunch Mrs. MacDougal, a cousin of Mrs. Pyper and Mrs. Tasker (H.O.E. students). She became a member, and has a little boy of five-and-a-half and a girl eighteen months. She lives out on a farm, and hopes to teach her boy to start with. Mrs. Varvill told us that Mr. Foggin, Director of Education, who lives and works at Salisbury, the capital, had a two hours' talk with Mr. Niven, as a result of his attendance at the Public Lecture. If this should bear fruit we need not regret having been unable to visit Salisbury.

IN THE TRAIN FROM LIVINGSTONE TO CAPE TOWN.

We started on Monday, 30th November, and breaking the journey at Bulawayo, on Tuesday, Mrs. Franklin spoke on Women's Institutes ; we boarded the train again that evening and spent Wednesday and Thursday travelling, arriving at the Cape, Friday mid-day ; the train being late. This is what the train will do. We shall actually—according to a wire received at Bulawayo, during our first visit there—get out at Wellington—two hours' journey short of Cape Town—going on to arrive early Saturday. We do not yet know why we do this, but time will solve the mystery !

We had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Hammond, of Plumtree, on the station as we passed through, and he told us that Mr. Foggin had agreed that he should start a Preparatory School for Boys under eleven, and he intended to work in the P.U.S., and would start in January.

The journey down has been unexpectedly bearable ; a fresh breeze mitigating the heat. It is pleasant to meet the scenery we first knew and loved—but it is really a case of how happy could I be with either—or all, of these various localities of South Africa—so different and so attractive.

We are now steaming out of Wellington where we have been just twenty-four hours. It is a very pretty place, surrounded by mountains, the Oliphants. The Huguenot University is the chief centre of interest, founded by Dr. Murray, who sent over to America for the first two principals, Miss Ferguson and Miss Bliss. They both lived to be very old, and have only recently died. Dr. Stoneman and Dr. Snell—one a literary, and the

other a scientific woman—are now heads. We stayed at the College, where eighty to one hundred women students are taken. It is the only College for women only, and is part of the South African University. In the morning we had morning tea with Dr. Snell at her very pretty little cottage in the grounds. In the afternoon the staff of the High School came to tea, and we showed the children's work. We then went for a motor drive up the mountain to Bain's Kloof—a wonderful bit of engineering—and overlooked some magnificent views. In the evening, Mrs. Franklin spoke. Mr. Davies, head of the Training College, was there and showed interest, and Miss Callahan, of the Girls' High School, bought the *Philosophy* and *Home and School Education*. Two members resulted, both with a view to joining the School for their own children.

CAPE TOWN.

The next morning we left at 6.30 for Cape Town, arriving at 9.0, and owing to Post Office and other business, arrived at our hostess's house about 10.0.

A demonstration and a lecture were held at 10.30, with morning tea, of which on this occasion we were very glad. There had been no breakfast car on the train, but we bought apricots off the tree so to speak.

This was a busy day ; at the morning meeting a number of teachers and others were present, including Miss King, of Wynberg High School. She is sister of the student, Miss King, of Alverstoke, and also a friend of Miss Goode, of Burgess Hill. Mr. Hutchinson, of the Western Province Preparatory School for Boys was there, and came in again one evening to the house I was staying at to talk further.

On Saturday afternoon we went to a garden party given by Mrs. Haddon, living now at the Botanical Gardens, Kirstenbosch. Mrs. Franklin did not speak at all, but the invited guests were members of the N.C.W., or those likely to be interested in P.N.E.U. We went over the gardens with Lady Rose-Innes, who is intimate with them. The situation at the foot of the mountain (Table Mountain) is wonderful. It is the Kew of South Africa, but with more natural background of beauty. In the evening we drove about ten miles round Kalk Bay to Simonstown, the Naval Station of the Peninsula, to dine with Mrs. Spilhaus, a keen educationist and writer, who had asked some people in after dinner to hear about P.N.E.U.

On the way home we got off the firm road into the sand and had some difficulty in getting back again. A very keen cold wind was blowing—the south-easter that the Cape people don't like, but that gives them cool nights. The weather here is very pleasant, nothing like so hot as it was in Rhodesia of course—just good English summer weather with ups and downs that break the monotony of the sunshine. That sounds ungrateful to the sun, but there have been days when one thought longingly of a good grey day. "The Mountain," of course, dominates Cape Town, and the inhabitants seemed to me to divide into two sections—those who go up the mountain and know it intimately and those who don't. On Sunday I went for a delightful walk through Wynberg Park, which is a great area of ground at the foot of one part of the mountain and that goes up the slope for miles. It is mostly quite wild, and you would never guess you were on park ground; but a certain part is most delightfully restrained, again, as Kew.

On Monday we started early to do various jobs in Cape Town, and lunched with Mrs. B. K. Long, and went on to a N.C.W. reception at the Alexandra Club, of which we were both made honorary members during our stay, as it might be a useful resting-place for us—and it did prove to be so. At 5 o'clock, Mrs. Franklin went to the studio of the Cape Town Wireless Station, and spoke for ten to fifteen minutes on P.N.E.U. I went with Madame Stadler (wife of the Belgian Consul), to "listen in" at a shop near by, unknown to Mrs. Franklin! Her voice came through perfectly well, and it was a great success. Mrs. Haddon (Hon. Secretary, P.N.E.U.), has had an enquiry since, of which I have not yet heard details. In the evening we drove to Sea Point to a public meeting with the Mayor in the chair. On Thursday I gave a demonstration lesson. A good meeting.

On Tuesday we saw Miss Ralph, Principal of The Church School, Herschel, who joined for Classes I. and II. In the afternoon there was a meeting and demonstration at Miss Kemp's, Rustenberg High School. Very good meeting. Miss Kemp joined for Classes I. and II. Much interest all round. In the evening we dined with Mme. Stadler, who got a number of people to come in after dinner.

On Wednesday morning Mrs. Franklin saw Dr. Viljoen, Director of Education for Cape Province. He expressed his willingness that any school desiring to do our work should do so.

Mrs. Franklin spread this permission broadcast in her subsequent lectures. Dr. Viljoen is unable to come himself, but is sending his Inspectors, including Mr. Bennie (Native Commissioner), on Friday afternoon to the public meeting. Notes of that will come in my next report. On Wednesday morning we saw Miss Gale, of Milburn House School. Miss Gordon, of the Junior School, is very keen to know more and is coming on Friday.

Thursday we gave a lecture and demonstration in the Argus Board Room; a small class of six boys attended; a good meeting.

I think Cape Town will show a big result, and indeed generally speaking, South Africa has responded well. To-day, we have still some ground to cover, and leave to-morrow early for Stellenbosch, in Mrs. Alston's charge, to do surrounding districts.

STELLENBOSCH.

Since writing the journal to catch the last mail, the meeting in Hidding Hall has taken place, and we are now at Stellenbosch, staying with Colonel and Mrs. Alston.

The Friday meeting was fairly well attended. Mr. Millard, Dr. Viljoen's Chief Inspector, and other Government teachers were present. We really could have stayed longer in Cape Town very usefully, but we must hope that those people who have appreciated the method, joined the Union, bought literature, and joined the School, as many have done, respectively, will spread the ideas, so that the people with whom we could not get into touch may also come to know of them. After answering innumerable questions round the table, which I hope may result favourably, we packed up our literature box and departed.

At Stellenbosch we had bad weather—the first we have encountered—and to-day is as wet and cold as it is probably with you in England.

On Saturday, we lunched with Mrs. Preston, of Drakenstein, who had most kindly invited about thirty people to hear Mrs. Franklin, and some children were also invited to be demonstrated upon! This was a successful meeting, and the lesson "told" much more than on Friday, when for the only time the conditions were distinctly bad. The Hall was enormous, and the children obliged to be on a platform from where they could certainly be seen and not heard—but that was not what we

wanted this time! But even so, the teachers amongst the audience voted for the continuance of the lesson. On Saturday, however, there was no question of that during the lesson, nor on Sunday, at Mrs. Alston's, when a great deal of interest was shown.

At the Friday meeting, Mr. Millard was present by Dr. Viljoen's request. Also Mr. Bennie, Chief Native Commissioner. The Headmasters of Observatory Boys' High School were interested enquirers. Mrs. N—— C—— joined the Union; she has a small private school, of the same sort as Miss P—— and Miss G——, inasmuch as they receive no Government grant, but of course need to conform sufficiently to the Government syllabus, so that their children shall pass on creditably.

On Monday, at Stellenbosch, the public meeting was poorly attended as it is a University town (or—in dimension—village), and the University term is just over. In term time it would have been such a meeting as at Rhodes (Grahamstown) or Maritzburg; for there are eight hundred students in residence. As it was, a Mr. Hirst and Mr. Donald from the University, and also a member of staff of the Boys' High School, were present. Mr. Hirst had been present on Sunday and took literature with which to enthuse his colleagues.

On Tuesday, we left Stellenbosch and motored to Somerset West for a drawing-room meeting. Few people, but quite good.

After leaving Mrs. Solly, at Sir Lowry's Pass, on December 16th, we went to George, in the Eastern Cape Province, by motor, hired from Cape Town. It was a six-cylinder Buick, one of a small fleet kept by Mrs. Stohr, formerly Elsie Hall, the pianist. We were driven by Mrs. M——, and after a very short carburettor disturbance had not any trouble at all. It was a perfectly lovely trip; and we covered eight hundred miles in a week. This sounds an American computation, but I remark it to show what tremendous distances South African travel entails. The train travel is at the rate of 2d. a mile, and sleeping accommodation and meals very moderate—3/- per unbroken journey in the one case, 7/6 per day (books of coupons) in the other, and both are good in their way. But the dust of the journey is unbelievable. It lies thick in an hour, and the only thing seems to be to grin and bear it. Mrs. Franklin and I kept having brilliant domestic ideas as to how the essential details could be improved, but we could do nothing at the moment! I should say that this lack of attention to

true comfort is typical of South African domesticity generally. Windows won't open or won't shut, and perhaps there is not a handy man for a hundred miles. I think the sunshine has something to do with it. Nothing seems to matter so much as it would otherwise.

En route to George, going through mile upon mile of rolling veldt with blue mountains in the distance, one realised the isolation of some of these farms, and how terribly difficult is the bringing up of children at home. The alternative is a boarding school, numbering even hundreds of children. This is certainly a Problem with a big P. The conditions are difficult, and a great force of energy and idealism will be needed to cope with them adequately.

The first night, after about one hundred and twenty miles driving, we slept at Swellendam, a place of former importance, and very prettily situated. Then the next night we reached Klein Brak River, a quite fascinating seaside place, as yet unknown, such a place as Clymping *was*—near Littlehampton—with the river and the sea, but with wonderful mountains again in the near distance, white sand and blue, blue sea, and the curling white-horses. I shall never forget the beauty of this trip, and these especial places. I had a delicious, long bathe the next morning. We then went on to George, picnicking for lunch on the way in another Bay, and arrived in time for tea with our hostess, Mrs. St. Leger, whose husband, a doctor, is almost the father of the place. We found in George a very English feeling. George, so-called after George IV., is a delightful place, nine miles from the sea, close to mountains, and shady by reason of the Government plantations. The virgin forests are too wild to walk in, and too inaccessible, but make a beautiful green mantle over the hillsides.

We had a glorious motor drive in the morning up to Montagu's Pass, with Mr. and Mrs. Thomson, who certainly understand such expeditions. We came to a steep hillside, bordering the road, at which we left the car, and scrambled up to pick some of the masses of *Watsonia* that grew there. Those who preferred were free to scratch their legs rather than their stockings! At another place we poked about for ferns, and despatched them to Miss Webb, as we had already sent other things, knowing that they will have every chance to flourish under her care. In the afternoon we had a meeting at the Masonic Hall. About forty people were present, including the

Bishop, who is paramount at St. Winifred's, the big girls' school, at which Miss E. Maud (H.O.E. student), taught. This was an unofficial meeting, so to speak, and though doubtless useful, we felt that more could have been done if we had been expected for longer beforehand. Mrs. R——, whose little girl was at Miss Curry's school, Bushey, was at the meeting, and intends to rejoin the Union and the School, for her younger girl, as yet too young. Mrs. D—— is coming to England shortly for the schooling of her family, and is determined to try to find something P.U.S. that suits in all respects. The Librarian, and the Secretary of the Library Committee, wish to put Miss Mason's books into the Free Library of George. Miss D—— also has a small class of little boys.

On Sunday we had a long and beautiful drive to Knysna, a district on the coast, with a headland and a deep bay, which could be made into a wonderful harbour. When one thinks how South Africa has developed in the last hundred years, it is likely that a very great deal may be done during the next hundred. As to weather we started in bright sunshine and returned in a Scotch mist. The climate of George is quite English in that it is incalculable; and they have no "seasons" for rain or drought. In the winter snow lies on the heights and very beautiful it must look.

On Monday we went to a bay, nine miles off, Herold's Bay, to bathe, and took surf-boards with us. Mr. and Mrs. Thomson were with us. She initiated me into the art and delight of surfing. It feels just like flying, though somewhat perilously, when you get it just right and you are carried a great distance on the board on the incoming wave.

In the afternoon we started forth again on our return journey, and slept that night at Riversdale—a *very* pretty place. In the evening we strolled down to the river by the light of the moon, and to the accompaniment of croaking *and* singing frogs—quite an orchestra, with the crickets' ceaseless chatter. These noises! The Christmas Beetle's is like the shrillest watchman's rattle you ever heard, and it *never* stops.

The next day we started early to reach Swellendam by 10 a.m., where we were to see Dr. St. Leger's daughter, for whom he joined the school as she has a little girl aged five, and no facilities for her education. Mrs. S—— means to start in September.

On leaving there we went to Hermanus, picnicking on the

way by a little stream flowing fast and clear. Both these beauties are unusual in Africa where the waters are muddy and sluggish as a rule, especially up-country. A host of wax-bills and some wag-tails were busy about the edge of the stream, and in the partial shade of a few gums we stayed for lunch. I think the rest of the day, or rather the mid-day part, was the hottest thing I have ever known. Sometimes a wind, seemingly from a furnace, blew across and one felt a sense of escape from being withered by the heat. A step nearer would have been fatal! After Caledon, where we had tea, and it was still burning, we digressed to Hermanus, where we were expected by Mrs. Judge, whom we had met in England, whose children had been at Miss McLeod's class at Richmond. Since returning to Africa she has engaged a Miss B—— straight from Miss Gale's School at Claremont, Cape Town, who is to teach the twins (aged seven) in the P.U.S. At a small, very small, gathering, a few of Mrs. Judge's friends, made whilst she was holiday-making there, we got one member for Johannesburg, and met Mrs. M——, who belonged to the Union many years ago, and would like her daughter to go to Ambleside in the near future. We also met Miss Prowse, Head Mistress of Ellerton Girls' School, at Cape Town, and renewed acquaintance with Miss Barclay, a Mistress at Miss Gale's, Milburn House, Claremont. We had a lovely picnic at Hermanus, bathing and picnicking and finding numbers of exquisite wild flowers. It is an ideal place, and quite small, having no railway station yet.

After these two delightful days we left early on Christmas Eve, to motor back to Cape Town, arriving in time for lunch at the Alexandra Club, which came in very useful during that day, and of which we had been made honorary members during our stay. In the afternoon we did a few remaining necessary things, including a visit to Koopman-de-Wet's house. This is an example of Dutch architecture; and is still furnished as formerly, kitchen and all. That night we slept on board, and began to feel really that our days were numbered in South Africa.

The next day, Christmas Day, we lunched at Madame Stadler's, and had a real Christmas dinner, turkey and plum pudding and—strawberries and cream! On returning to the boat we found bouquets, etc., and also members of the N.C.W. to wish us good-bye. Even then the talk was of P.N.E.U., and two people asked me for a prospectus of Scale How with a

view to later on. To fill South African posts such future students would be very acceptable and would solve the very real difficulties of passage money, contracts and home ties. The Windsor Castle actually pulled away from Cape Town on Christmas Day—in the afternoon—amidst wavings and shoutings from a large assembly of people. It is quite a known amusement to see the Mail Boats go, and on Christmas Day many people were at leisure. We, certainly, were of their number, and it was quite odd to feel that for the next seventeen days we were to be in one place, and have no engagements. I cannot attempt to say how much I have enjoyed it. From all points of view it has been sheer enjoyment.

"Once aboard the lugger" and we felt that the trip was indeed over. But it proved far otherwise. We did not have a meeting because we found that through this and that circumstance we could arouse as much interest as the ship's passengers were likely to yield. I write just after leaving Madeira, and as we have taken on thirty new people in the first-class and as many second-class, there is a probable new field. On board we found Sister M— C— (whose brother, Mr. Stone, was for thirty years a master at Eton, and whose father taught Dr. Lyttelton). She came from the Diocesan Girls' School, at Pretoria, where J— D— was at school for nine years. Also Sister S— J—, whom we had met at Grahamstown (St. Peter's), where she is in charge of the music. In this way our literature found its way to all parts of the ship. There were also Professor Notcutt, his wife and two boys from Stellenbosch. Many passengers, in the second-class especially, had heard Mrs. Franklin speak here or there, and the remnants of our literature have been much in demand. A Mr. and Mrs. T— with their little girl are bound for Gorleston, and have been very glad to hear about Mrs. Thom's school. Captain R—, Professor of Psychology, at Rhode's University, ex-Cambridge, and also concerned with education, read some of our literature.

The total result of the tour can hardly be measured at present, but I do truly believe that the impulse to know more of P.N.E.U. thought has been given to willing minds, and that the actual net results will lead to more in the near future. In addition to one hundred members and twenty P.U.S. members, there has been much literature distributed, and many orders for books to be sent to the office. This willingness to buy and to read is a good feature and there is also promise in the fact

that eight out of the twenty P.U.S. members are heads of schools of especial reputation in South Africa and in their own neighbourhood. Apart from definite arranged meetings of which we held thirty-four, and demonstrations of which there were twelve, there were both luncheons and dinners and "morning teas" at which P.N.E.U. and its methods were under discussion, numerous interviews, i.e., informal calls paid to Mrs. Franklin by people who wished to know more. We were perpetually showing the children's work, and at the towns where we stayed in separate houses (though never at a great distance), that is, in the majority of towns, we could work in separate circles, which was undoubtedly useful. I feel very much that quite a solid stone has been thrown into the pond and the ripples have by no means finished their journey to the shore. Mrs. Franklin also addressed several schools, and never refused an opportunity. At Bloemfontein in one day she spoke four times, having slept in the train, arriving at 6 a.m. She spoke at nine N.C.W. meetings and nine J.W.U. meetings. During our stay in South Africa we covered the ground from Cape Town and neighbourhood as far North as Livingstone, and as far East as Durban on the coast. We met everywhere with the very *greatest* kindness and hospitality, and as far as our programme permitted we did as much sight-seeing as possible. It would not be easy to over-estimate the smoothness and ease with which our plans were laid and carried out for us, and I personally, and I feel sure Mrs. Franklin would endorse this, have come away with very happy memories of a very lovely country.

On board the Windsor Castle we travelled with Sir Roland Bourne, who was for twenty-five years in the Civil Service in South Africa. Since his retirement he has devoted himself to an idea that he has very much at heart, and that took shape through him in March, 1925, under the name of the Empire Community Settlement. Its object is to encourage people with fixed incomes to emigrate to another part of the Empire rather than remain in England, where small incomes do not go far, and where the over-crowding is so deleterious to body and soul. It is felt that the retired man with a growing-up family can enjoy life and cultivate his garden to better advantage in the sunshine of our Dominions, and prepare greater opportunities for his children than the England of to-day can offer. The scheme is an exceptional one inasmuch as the intending emigrant is not

pushed to a decision "to win or lose it all." He is not asked to risk any capital, but can "try out" the venture within a period of five years with no more outlay than the yearly expenses of rent and board which must be incurred wherever he lives. At present, and because South Africa came first on the list of applicants' preference, this is the country where Sir Roland and Admiral Lawson have been making their enquiries. They have returned with certain "firm offers" of land and required buildings, etc., from municipalities, and it is probable that the scheme will go ahead rapidly. From the Empire point of view it is admirable in that the type of settler though not hitherto considered, is nevertheless a type that can be of the utmost use in consolidating good feeling amongst fellow members of the Empire. Also it may be confidently asserted that the settlers' interests will be thoroughly safe-guarded since it is no private or syndicate's enterprise to sell land and catch capital. The P.N.E.U. is represented on the E.C.S. Committee by Miss Louisa Macdonald, and the address is Regent House, 89, Kingsway, from where all further particulars can be had. P.N.E.U. can and will undoubtedly be called upon to play an important part when the E.C.S. scheme begins on a practical basis. The education and careers of children in the Dominions is the Committee's main object in setting the scheme on foot, and will also be the chief reason that will induce parents to leave the Home Country to make homes for their children and children's children in suitable parts of the Empire.

CHILDREN AND BOOKS.

By MRS. CONYERS ALSTON.*

It is the wonderful power that books have of presenting experiences picturing life in its manifold relations and infinite variety that gives their supreme value as a supplement to, I might almost say a substitute for, formal education.

The ideals which children gain from books are their constant associates, and mould their characters even more than human companions.

They live with them not only while they read, but also while they are otherwise engaged; and suggestions so subtle as to pass almost unnoticed linger in the mind, to influence emotions and express themselves in action.

"Folk Lore as a Historical Science."—*Gomme*.

WE English are not a bookish nation like the Germans—yet we have produced the greatest literature since the days of classic Greece. We have produced a great literature simply because we are not a bookish nation. Our literature is great because it is the outcome of living experience. The common lot must be shared. Deeds must be done. And good literature is the natural result of that sane outlook which only comes from a share in the active life of humanity and a living conviction of the significance of daily toil, of words and deeds and human relationships, and, above all, of the beauty of the world, and from a living faith too in God, and the triumph of Good over Evil. As soon as men cease themselves to *live*, and only write, the effect is evident in a certain lack of virility in their outlook. Feeling degenerates into sentimentality. Women, too, fail as writers when they throw aside the obligations of womanhood and fill their days with the writing of books, looking on at life as spectators, with a view to copy, instead of diving deep into the stream itself. We are suffering to-day from a surplus of professional writers, especially women writers. Too many books are written by people who do nothing else—and therefore their ideas and points of view are too often artificial and out of touch with the realities of life.

Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë were domesticated women with a high sense of the importance of the ordinary tasks that naturally fall to women. If they had held advanced

* President of the P.N.E.U. Branch, Stellenbosch, C.P., South Africa.

views on the subject of women's lot they might have left us a greater number of books—but would the books have been so well worth reading as those we have? The books that live are not written by those whose lives are spent with the pen always in the hand. Books that stand the test of time are not written by those whose lives are spent in the seclusion of the study or within garden walls, shut out from the stir and whirl of battle. But the study and the seclusion of the garden are necessary too. In their turn they remain a part of every complete life. Only in the hours of silence do we learn to understand the meaning of the struggle and the whirl. The problems of life are only solved for each one in solitude; prayer and the wise interpretation of past experiences guiding us to our conduct of the future.

And in the solving of our life-problems what part ought books to play? How far are they a necessary part of a child's education? The question is a big one. Bookishness in a child is undesirable; nay more, it is prejudicial to a child's development, for bookishness precludes the physical activity and the self-expression by means of play which are the foundation of all growth. Books—or the stories contained in books—are necessary, but the child who is forever seen with a book in his hand is not growing up in a healthy, normal way. A story should suggest ideas and ideas should result in action. Always to be taking in and never giving out is a symptom of mental and physical inertia, and the little girl who spends every spare moment curled up on the sofa with a book is likely to degenerate into that mental parasite, the inveterate novel-reader, who is generally rather a stupid person with no originality. Such a person may read a dozen books without the least idea of the literary merits or demerits of what she has been reading. She may have a wholly illiterate mind. Yet no one can be well-educated who has not a keen appreciation of good literature, and children must be trained to read well and wisely.

The literary mind is indeed rare. For a hundred who will read a book for what it has to tell or for amusement, only one perhaps will read it also for its literary value. The appreciation of good literature, for all our schools and universities, remains the possession only of a few.

Yet, just as the average person can be trained to appreciate good music and art, he can also be trained to appreciate good

literature. And it is in the nursery that the key to the palace of good literature is opened. The reason why so few people have developed the critical faculty with regard to reading is that so few have grown up in the company of good books—*only* good books—but have been allowed, while their minds were growing, to read any printed twaddle within the covers of a book or magazine.

Miss Charlotte Mason, the creator of the Parents' National Educational Union, has been a power in education because she is the first person to base her gospel on the training of the child's mind chiefly by means of good literature. In the Parents' Union School children are taught from the beginning by means of good books and the text book is eliminated as much as possible, and the result is that children learn to appreciate and prefer good literature to the reading of inferior stuff.

Stories make the child's life intelligible to himself and are therefore a means of gaining self-knowledge without self-consciousness. I have never been able to develop any enthusiasm for the Montessori system since I learnt from Madame Montessori's book that stories play no part in her scheme of education. Why, stories are the very source of education among all races. The hunger of the child for stories is the hunger of the race for knowledge. All great teachers have been great story-tellers, and our Lord was the greatest of all. A mere statement of divine truth would never have impressed the simple uninformed minds of His hearers as the parables did. Truth is absorbed and becomes a part of the child's self when enshrined in the form of a story.

Stories, too, enlarge a child's knowledge of the world, develop his imagination and educate his sympathies. Much reading may be a weariness of the flesh, but the well-read person who also takes his share in the work of the world, is not likely to be narrow in mind or lacking in sympathy.

Animal stories have always played a large part in the development of children and of the race. Andrew Lang truly remarks that there are not so many fairies in the old fairy-tales after all, but that the most common characters are birds, beasts and fishes, who talk and act like men. What child has not thrilled with excitement at the rehearsal of *The Three Bears* and *Red Riding Hood*? There is a stage in the child's life, I've found, between two and three years of age, when he wants

Æsop's Fables, too, *The Three Bears* at intervals all day long. are an important part of every child's mental equipment; and that volume of Folk-tales from Flanders, *Beasts and Men*, by Jean de Bosschère, so full of humour, sense and nonsense, is a book that could not fail to give delight.

Animal stories do much to nourish in a child's heart the spirit of St. Francis. A child whose heart had melted with pity for the trials of *Raggylug* would not be likely to forget the needs of his pet rabbits. No child who had learned to love the story of *Black Beauty* could ever afterwards neglect or ill-treat a horse. Even our visits to the Zoo and walks in the country mean more to us than they did formerly after reading the *Jungle Books*, and *The Just So Stories*, and *Tommy Smith's Animals*.

Grimm, too, gives us a lesson in kindness to animals in the tale of *The House in the Forest*, in which we are told of the prince who could not be freed from the enchantments of a witch until a maiden should come who would be kind to the cock, the hen, and the brindled cow.

And the story of *The Ugly Duckling* in itself is a beautiful and touching sermon.

Children are sometimes cruel to animals from ignorance and lack of imagination, but with children who have been brought up in an atmosphere of love themselves there is a kinship between them and animals. A slight to a favoured pet is an unforgivable offence. "Love me, love my dog," is their attitude. There is something indeed unnatural about the child who is without any love for animals or interest in their ways. Any fact concerning animals interests a child, and we can hardly give a child too much natural history.

The frog's tongue, the cow's stomach, the snake's fangs, the owl's method of disgorging the bones and feathers of his victims, the rat's ingenious method of stealing eggs, are facts of greater significance than the Battle of Waterloo or the rivers of England, and so *Tommy Smith's Animals* supplies a thirst in the child for accurate information about the creatures in whom he is chiefly interested, if it cannot rank as imaginative literature as do *The Just So Stories*.

The story's primary function, however, is not to instruct but to inspire and cultivate the imagination by the suggestion of ideas. We must not curb the child's imagination by a too strict adherence to accurate information, leaving out the realm

of fancy, but we must seize the moment when interest is most alert to teach such facts as will enrich the child's mind. Incidentally, natural history teaches a child to use his own eyes and also is the best means of arousing an interest in the geography of the world. India becomes a reality when we learn it is the home of the tiger; and Africa, the home of the lion. The Jungle, the Prairie, the Veld, the Bush, the Arctic Regions, become interesting and a part of the real world as the child reads of the animals who dwell in these regions.

Seton Thompson's *Wild Animals I have known* is a classic. It is the work of one whose sympathy with animals and powers of observation, aided by imagination and the gift of interpretation, amount to genius. His animals are real characters. They have distinct personalities of their own. All the tragedy and pathos of life is in these stories, and for that reason I would hesitate to read them all through to very little children. I came to this conclusion after seeing a little boy burst into heart-breaking sobs at the death of the fierce old Lobo.

One of the many tragic things about the war has been that children have been growing up familiar with ideas of suffering, but it is a strange thing that the sufferings of animals are more real to them than those of human beings. A little girl who burst into tears at the picture of a dead horse on a battle-field saying: "If I had a horse I wouldn't like the Germans to kill it," showed no particular sign of distress when she saw her father, whom she adored, lying wounded and maimed and bandaged in hospital.

Rudyard Kipling takes us to a wonderful adventurous world in *The Jungle Book* and *The Just So Stories*. I cannot count the times I have read aloud the stories in the "Just So" book. During a dreary month of grey skies and perpetual snow, spent in the hotel of a grim Yorkshire village, those stories were our daily bread, especially those that took us to the sunshine of South Africa, a land we knew. And the greatest favourite of all was *The Beginning of the Armadilloes*. Only Rudyard Kipling or Lewis Carroll would dare to write anything so absurd. Day after day, for thirty days or thereabouts, those two rascals, Stickly-Prickly and Slow-and-Solid, played their pranks, and day after day we laughed at the same places, and when Slow-and-Solid said to the Painted Jaguar—"Because if she said what you said she said, it's just the same as if I said

what she said she said"—day after day we bounded out of our chairs with joy.

"I like 'How' stories," said a little girl to me. All stories dealing with the beginnings of things, however fantastical they may be, appeal to children—even when they know the story is entirely an invention. The *Just So Stories* respond to this thirst for knowledge of first causes. So does, in a different way, *Madam How and Lady Why*, and Florence Holbrook's *Book of Nature Myths*. In Sara Bryant's *How to tell Stories to Children* (an invaluable little book) there are several delightful stories of this kind, "How the roses become pink," is a gem; and "Why the sea is salt," is a great source of merriment.

Of the Jungle Stories *Rikki Tikki Tavi* is the favourite, I find, but I think the delightful name has something to do with the choice. A quaint, fantastic name with a humorous suggestion about it amuses and arrests children's attention at once. Rumpelstilskin, Tom-Tit-Tot, Puck, Goody-Two-Shoes—mention those magic names and they are all agog. Nobody would now dream of calling a pet mongoose by any other name than "Rikki Tikki," and we all know a dog called "Kim." In every educated British household where there are children we find the influence of Rudyard Kipling, just as we do of Lewis Carroll.

To think that we in middle life had to grow up without Kipling seems an injustice. We had *Alice in Wonderland* and *The Water-Babies*, however, and so we were not altogether starved. People were beginning to understand a child's mind, but the purifying powers of innocent laughter were not appreciated by our grand-parents. You could make a child as miserable as you liked by such stories as *Christy's Old Organ* and *Peep of Day*, but jokes were not for the young. Books were primarily for edification, not for amusement, and books written for children were almost invariably religious—religious in a very depressing way. The world was not a beautiful place of buttercups and daisies where we had to serve the Lord with gladness all the days of our life, but a place of trial and temptation, where we had to travel along a path of thorns, with a horned devil ready to spring out and at us, tooth and nail, or to lay traps for our stumbling footsteps, and the golden crown at the end seemed oh, such a long way off, besides being a doubtful reward.

But in the sixties people began to wake up to the truth that we might do more for our children by giving them what they enjoy and want than by stuffing them prematurely with partially understood theology and moralisings, under the delusion that we were improving their minds and assisting the progress of their souls. People began to realise that it is good for children to romp and laugh and that it is good to cultivate their imaginations. There was a distinct movement, which has gone on steadily, in the direction of an effort to understand, appreciate, and enjoy childhood. It is no mere coincidence that *The Water-Babies* was published in 1863, *Alice in Wonderland* in 1865, the first number of *Aunt Judy's Magazine* with Mrs. Ewing's Stories in 1866, and *At the Back of the North Wind* in 1870. And then in the eighties we had such books as Canton's *W.V.*, *Her Book*, a beautiful and charming idyll of a real little girl, not written for children, but just a living picture of how a father's life was enriched—and how ours might be too if we were not so dull—by the joyous companionship of a dear little girl. And then Rudyard Kipling gave us *Wee Willie Winkie*.

It is indeed a long way from *The Fairchild Family* to *Alice in Wonderland*. The difference in the two books is an interesting commentary on the evolution of ideas regarding the training of children.

Of course there were *The Arabian Nights* and the old fairy tales, which always fascinated children, and the first translation into English of *Grimm's Fairy Tales* in 1823 had a large sale. But the reading of such books was rather tolerated by broad-minded parents than encouraged. Certainly the educational value of fairy tales was not dreamt of. And I think even thirty years ago the scorn of *Stalky and Co.* for *Eric* would have been deemed irreverent.

Let us arm our children for the slings and arrows of later life by cultivating the spirit of innocent laughter. Let us give them something to laugh at, to laugh at without any suspicion of malice. Thus only do they learn the relative importance of events and how not to make mountains out of mole-hills. We cannot expect in them a subtle sense of humour, but we can fill their young lives with wholesome laughter, and Lewis Carroll and Rudyard Kipling are always at hand to help us.

Some of the old fairy tales too are full of good-natured

fun; such are *The Three Sillies*, *The Discreet Hans*, and *The Hare and the Hedgehog*. *Brer Rabbit*, too, is an exhilarating companion for a wet day.

Beautiful as most of the Hans Andersen's tales are, there is a vein of sadness in them that should make us careful not to read them indiscriminately. *Grimm's Fairy Tales*, with the lived-happily-ever-after endings are, on the whole, more whole-some reading. *The Snow Queen* has a most depressing effect; the reading of it positively makes one shiver. The sorrows and misfortunes of *The Ugly Duckling* are almost too painful, and even the picture of the silly little fir-tree, lying neglected and forlorn in the garret, to be finally thrown out in the yard and burnt, hurts. The "infinite pathos" of life may be in that little story of the fir-tree, but we do not want children to feel that life is like that. Just now and then it is good to touch their hearts with a note of pathos, but it is joy, for the most part, that we want to give them, and there isn't enough joy in Hans Andersen.

Much of the satire, too, of Hans Andersen, is beyond the comprehension of any child under ten. What child, for instance, under that age could see the satire of *The Emperor's New Clothes*, or *The Nightingale*, or even of *The Princess and the Swineherd*, or *The Princess and the Bean*? As for *The Little Red Shoes*, it is a cruel, immoral story. The idea that a little girl, merely because she loved overmuch her little red shoes,—and what child wouldn't love a new pair of red shoes?—should have such a terrible punishment, is all wrong from the ethical point of view. Nor can the story of *Little Klaus and Big Klaus* be called an edifying one. Little Klaus was a liar and a cheat, yet he is represented as a hero. I avoided this story as long as possible, but a picture of the farmer finding the sacristan in the chest was too much for our curiosity—besides, one child had read it herself and thought it a lovely story—so I yielded. "And you are not to miss one word," said a warning voice, remembering *The Fairchild Family*, and on the alert for maternal evasions.

To me the idea of the dead grandmother of little Klaus sitting up in the cart as if alive and the landlord throwing the wine in her face was distinctly unpleasant, but when we came to where Big Klaus kills his grandmother with an axe I stopped, exclaiming: "Oh, this is a horrid story!" "Go on, I love it," said a five-year-old (she who had wept at the picture of a

dead horse). There was nothing horrible to her in the idea of the grandmother being killed, because her sympathies had not first been aroused by a description of the grandmother as a dear old lady with silvery hair who loved little children. The grandmother, indeed, did not matter alive or dead. The of view, therefore, was unnecessarily squeamish. My point of Little Klaus are too preposterous, too far removed from anything in their own lives, to have a bad moral influence, and Little Klaus was all the time outwitting a bigger scoundrel than himself. The story is therefore on a different plane from *The Little Red Shoes*, for it does not give pain nor offend the child's sense of justice.

This idea of the hero as a clever rogue who outwits his neighbour is common in primitive stories. A high sense of honour is the virtue of a highly evolved people. Considering, indeed, the attitude of primitive races towards Truthfulness there is something to wonder at in the truthfulness of our own children. They invent—yes—but they condemn deliberate "story-telling" in one another as rigidly as we do ourselves, if they are brought up in a truthful atmosphere. But they are pleased when, in the story, the clever rogue gets the better of his stupid neighbour. They accept the tricks of their primitive heroes with laughter, as they did those of the pantomime clown before he had vanished from the stage.

The hero of *Puss in Boots* attains his success in life by a trick. *Jack the Giant Killer* conquered by his ability in outwitting the giants. *Jack of the Beanstalk* was a lazy young rascal, with a get-rich-quick type of mind. And what a little fraud Grimm's *Valiant Little Tailor* was! Yet our children, whom we bring up to be truthful in word and deed, accept these tales without question—and without harm.

I do not mean to imply, however, that tricking and deceit are invariably condoned and commended in the fairy story. In the Japanese fairy story told by Ozaki of *The White Hare and the Crocodiles*, the little hare is severely punished for practising deception on the crocodiles, and the penalty was not removed until he had confessed his wickedness and expressed repentance. But it was kindness and sympathy for his sufferings that induced the state of repentance. A curious feature of this story is that the good fairy who comes to the aid of the little white hare is a full-grown man. In the Japanese and Chinese stories the "fairy" corresponds to the medieval

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idea of an angel. In the main, we must refrain from being hypercritical with regard to the primitive attitude towards truthfulness.

Generally speaking, however, we find virtue represented in the light of Beauty, and Evil as all that is hideous and horrible.

The story of the beautiful and good girl from whose mouth jewels dropped as she spoke and the ugly evil-hearted step-sister from whose mouth toads and worms fell, is worth volumes of sermons on the beauty of holiness and the ugliness of sin. The physical repugnance of children—and I have noticed the same trait among the natives in South Africa—towards reptiles and crawling creatures is here appealed to with some purpose, as well as the love children share in common with all primitive beings, for bright, glittering things.

In the Japanese story of *The Tongue-Cut Sparrow* we have again the evil nature punished in a characteristic manner. In this tale we have a kind old man who made a pet of the sparrow, and his ill-natured wife who cut the sparrow's tongue because it had pecked at some starch-paste. The old man, distressed, goes to seek the sparrow and eventually finds him in his home. The sparrow entertains him royally and gives him in a wicker basket valuable gifts on his departure. The wife, jealous and envious, feigns repentance and also goes to visit the sparrow and she too brings back a wicker basket, but on opening it, not beautiful presents come forth, but all sorts of disgusting and horrible live things which bite and pull and scratch. This reminds one of Hawthorne's version of *Pandora's Box*, which I have found very unpopular. To be left with nothing but Hope is a very poor interpretation of Life.

It is rather surprising that such a terrifying story as *The Tale of a Youth who Set out to Learn what Fear was* should still be included in modern editions of Grimm, and that Andrew Lang should have put it in *The Blue Fairy Book*. To me it is a frightsome tale, but some children read it with equanimity and even amusement. You never may be sure what may frighten a child. I once read aloud Hawthorne's version of the Minotaur with disastrous results. That night a child woke up crying out that she had dreamt of "a horse with a man's voice," and the next night of an alarming creature which she described as "a hippopotamus slug with black slushy wings." I certainly should not like to meet such a monster myself.

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In the fairy story goodness means, for the most part, kindness of heart and valour, while wickedness means cruelty and cowardice and ill-nature. Now, kindness and fearlessness are just the two virtues that children most admire and love, and their opposites do they condemn and dislike. We mothers might well take this to heart. Most educated mothers do try and teach their children to be kind and to control their tempers, but not many realise the importance of teaching children to be brave. Our own fear for our children's personal safety is one of the greatest handicaps they have.

"Don't walk on that wall, you'll break your neck—Don't climb that tree, you'll fall!" exclaims the mother or nurse, oblivious to the fact that the desire to climb that tree or wall is a sign of mental as well as physical growth, and that by hampering the child physically we are injuring his spirit, and then mothers explain away any lack of spirit by saying: "Poor child, he is all nerves, you know!" whereas, they themselves are generally responsible. We cannot make brave men and women without letting our children run risks. Physical courage is the forerunner of moral courage.

The fear of being afraid, of which we heard much during the war, is no doubt an echo from the nursery. We have no right to surround our children with a network of physical limitations merely because there is a remote chance that they may hurt themselves.

Virtue is a word that has lost its original significance. There can be no virtue without valour. And children realise this unconsciously. And yet when we talk of a *good* child we seldom mean a brave child; we mean rather, a faint-hearted child who does not make his mother's heart jump every minute by a superabundance of physical vitality.

Gaiety of heart also counts for much in the old folk tales. Grimm's *Two Wanderers* is typical. In this story the cheery little tailor, who faced life and misfortune with a smile, finally conquered and married the king's daughter, while the croaking old shoe-maker ended his life in misery.

All fairy stories are true—that is, true to life as seen by primitive folk and by children.

"As we read fairy tales to our children," says Doctor Karl Pearson, "we may read history for ourselves. No longer oppressed with the real and the baroque, we may see primitive human customs and the life of primitive man and woman

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cropping out at almost every sentence of the nursery tale Back in the far past we can build up the life of our ancestry—the little kingdom, the queen or her daughter as king-maker, the simple life of the royal household, and the humble candidate for the kingship, the priestess with her control of the heathen and her power over youth and maid."

It is by reading the folk-lore of a nation that we come most truly to understand the spirit—the prevailing ideas—that have formed the people. Andrew Lang did a fine work in compiling his various fairy books and has contributed by so doing to the joy of the world, but he might have done even more if he had kept the stories in each book confined to one source, instead of giving us, for instance, Irish and Swahili and Indian stories in one volume. It is of more value to give a child a series of English, Indian, or Chinese stories, than first one of English, then another of Chinese origin.

While disparaging cosmopolitanism and realising that a first-hand intelligent knowledge of his own surroundings is more important than a second-hand knowledge of Central Africa, we are justified in the belief that, grafted on to the knowledge of his own particular corner of the world, we are giving the child a liberal education by opening his mind to a living interest in far-off countries of the wide world, especially in those—for they appeal to children most—still in a primitive state of civilisation—those, like Peter Pan, that have not yet grown up.

Our children show their kinship with primitive man by their delight in living over again, by means of the folk tale, the life of their own distant past. The doings, the absurdities of primitive human beings, they accept without any consciousness of incongruity. Feed a child's mind on the folk-lore of all nations and you have set him on the road that leads to the study of history, anthropology and literature, and incidentally given him lessons in geography and even in philosophy.

We cannot read the Japanese fairy stories, for instance, without learning something distinctive about the Japanese people. There is little in them of the love of man for maid and of married bliss as the reward of goodness. In common with the Chinese the virtues held in highest esteem are respect and duty to parents.

There is also a happy indifference to the taking of life—which is not characteristic of Chinese stories.

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In the Chinese popular tales we find a high ideal of conduct and of justice. We get glimpses into many curious customs and ceremonies, and we see the Chinese as a hard-working nation, living in a continual state of struggle against poverty. Wealth and learning are held in great regard. Also, we see how death is ever present in their minds by their continual observances at the graves of their ancestors. We see, for instance, a woman bringing money to buy food for the dead in the Land of Shadows. Priests, evil spirits, fairies, Heaven and the Goddess of Mercy, beggars, temples, the love of wealth and the commercial instincts of the people—we find them all in their popular tales. Unlike the Japanese, on the other hand, animals play a small part in their stories. Nor do we find anything of the war-like spirit of Japan. Not conquering heroes but men of meditation and learning win the day.

The idea of the dead requiring food seems to our unsophisticated mind an echo from the far past. Yet in Lancashire, we are told, a belief still lingers that on the journey to the other world food is necessary! We are not really so civilised as we supposed. What is our practice of "touching wood" or the exclamation "unberufen" but a survival of an act of propitiation or an incantation to some unknown power, analagous to the belief among certain primitive peoples that the name of the totem that protects the tribe must never be mentioned? What is the use of a family crest but a survival of totemism? The Highlands of Scotland take as much pride in their crests as do the Indians of North America in their totem badges. There are very few people—particularly women—who are completely free from some superstition which has its origin in the primitive beliefs of far-off times. I have heard the wife of an Irish Dean solemnly affirm that she had heard the banshee. I know another woman of the educated classes who, when the cream wouldn't churn, put a splash of cream on the dairy door, "to make the butter come." What was this but an act of propitiation? I have heard another express fear because a swallow flew into a room, asserting that "A swallow in a house is a bad omen." And when we come to the peasantry what do we find? In Galway the Claddagh fisherfolk will not go out to fish if they meet a fox, and in another part of Connaught the people believe foxes understand human speech and can be propitiated by kindness. In Japanese folk-lore we find the same attributes ascribed to the fox.

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In certain parts of England and Scotland ill-luck is associated with the hare. In Japan again we find the hare is a prominent character in the old folk tales. And it is not long since there existed a belief in certain parts of Ireland and of Scotland that men were frequently turned into seals. Christianity has never completely subdued paganism, and the early Church Fathers thought it was wiser to adopt rather than to suppress certain pagan ceremonies and customs, harmless in themselves, but in some mysterious way gratifying to the converts. In Fiona MacLeod's book, *The Sin-Eater and other Tales*, we have a vivid and beautifully written illustration of the manner in which Christian beliefs and paganism exist together in the minds of a simple and primitive people.

After all, we can only educate up to a certain point. It takes more than one generation to humanise a mind. There is much room for improvement in our schools, but in the end it is the home, the people the child meets in the home, the things talked about in the home, the books he finds waiting for him to read, the things his mother says to him as he is tucked up in bed at night, that, for the most part determine his future.

America has much to teach us in the education of children and we might well borrow one excellent idea for the encouragement of the reading of good books. In the large public libraries of the United States there are children's sections in which specially qualified readers are employed to read at certain hours well chosen stories from the rich fields of English and American literature. They also assist children in the choice of books and sometimes they tell stories instead of reading them.

Let us have children's libraries and reading hours not only in our large cities, but in every country town and village. To a certain extent the work might be voluntary. No work would be more rewarded or could leave a more beneficial mental influence on the reader herself, and many educated women and girls of leisure might well take it up. The work would, of course, have to be organised, and have a distinct educational aim. Think what an hour in fairy-land would mean to many poor children.

About the age of ten or eleven children outgrow the fairy tale, desiring something more like life as they know it to be or to have been in the past. They still want adventure of course—battle, murder and sudden death—but on a larger

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canvas and semi-historical. Then comes the call for the great Epics and Sagas and Eddas, for such stories as that of Robin Hood, King Arthur, The Odyssey, The Cid, The Song of Roland. Besides these, to girls, Mrs. Ewing and Mrs. Molesworth make their appeal at this age, but Mrs. Molesworth they soon outgrow.

And now we enter the palace of literature where dwell Scott, Dickens, Kingsley, Maria Edgeworth, Charlotte Brontë, Jane Austen, Thackeray, George Eliot. Boys may be excused, perhaps, for preferring Marryat and Fennimore Cooper to Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë.

For children under ten the best we can give them is still the oldest. At the same time our children, as heirs of all the ages, have a right to enjoy the best literature for children of modern times. It is strange that, with the exception of Mrs. Ewing, the best books of modern times for children are written by men, not women. Women excel as novelists, but they cannot stand beside men in the presentation of the purely imaginative and fanciful story that appeals so much to young children. Dickens, Scott, Hawthorne, Rudyard Kipling, Ruskin, Poe, Kingsley, Lewis Carroll, George MacDonald, have given children generously of their best, and that best we grown-ups can enjoy almost as much as the children themselves.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

[Continued from page 130.]

III.

I HAVE read your letter with much interest. May I say that we quite understand that you do not see your way to adopt a new system in a school which is already doing successful work on the lines for which it was started? Miss Mason was herself entirely averse to offering a "system"—a set of good plans (or even of bright ideas!) which used in and for themselves should produce certain results, and for this reason she did not care to send the programmes for payment *only*, but only on condition that they should be carried out in the light of the Philosophy of Education which has been her contribution to the cause of education. That she should use certain methods to carry out her work is a *sine quâ non*, but the methods do not belong to a system which can be bought and administered like a "cure" (which may or may not work) but are the outcome of principles which have resulted from certain "findings" as to the laws of mind. To discuss the method as if it were a system leads nowhere, for a system is cut and dried and the material upon which it is used must be made to fit; whereas a method is the result of principles, living organisms, which have powers of growth, expansion and adaptability.

In answer to the objections of your colleague:

(1) "I subscribed for the material for one year so that I could see what value it had to offer to us. I may be wrong in my action, but I was unable to get any particular value from it."

A subscription for a year's programmes is of no value, as I have already indicated. There is no intrinsic merit in Miss Mason's method apart from the principles on which it is based.

(2) "I do feel that the emphasis on 'living books' is important. I should be sorry indeed if our classes were not also stimulated to a wide use of such books. I do not feel, however, that this feature is a 'Mason feature,' despite the fact that it is made the centre of their system."

Any schools can get living books and most of them do, but

the supply of books is regulated not by the children's needs but by the prevalent idea that a child's need is intensive rather than extensive, and also by the fact that though most school authorities are willing to be generous in matters of hygiene and apparatus, books do not as yet take the important place they should occupy. Also, the idea is still uppermost that a teacher, trained to be a specialist in one branch, has extracted the elixir of the subject of which he is master and is able to feed his pupils with it, pigeon-like, without effort on the part of the children. It is the *principle* that counts as regards "living books." Any good teachers know what they are and can get them without difficulty, but they do not supply books to the child as the food upon which he is to feed and *grow*. They rather incline to books of the tabloid order from which to supply the information by which the pupil may know what is necessary for examination purposes or for his future career.

(3) "You probably remember my questioning of any single system as a supposed educational 'cure-all.'"

We do not advocate any system as an educational "cure-all." Miss Mason's *method*, springing from vital principles and some knowledge of the laws of mind, seems to meet the needs of children at all points. A "school which is open-minded to the best of everything" is apt to become a patch-work of good plans without any unifying principle.

(4) "May I add that even in England there are very strong opponents of the Mason method and many who think it very restrictive."

That there is opposition goes without saying. No educational method that implies such a *volte face* from time-honoured practices could be suffered to make way uncriticised, but the opposition comes from those who do not distinguish between a *method* based on philosophic principles and a *system* which merely advocates devices that have been found useful.

I add a few notes on the questions put by one of your teachers, but what I have already said applies in general to each of the questions, Nos. 2 to 9.

(1) "Under this system how are children taught to read?"

Miss Mason sketched in her first volume, *Home Education*, a method she had herself found successful, but she often recommended others, e.g., that contained in *The Happy Readers*, and we also use *The New Beacon Reader* (English edition, Ginn). Miss Mason avoided the use of coloured

letters and all apparatus other than a box of letters or words. She used to tell her students here, "Teachers must in this, as in all other matters, mix their work with brains," for children differ, and a method which helps one child may seem a stumbling block to another. A good teacher usually has a method she prefers, and Miss Mason was quite willing to leave it to the teacher as long as the child learnt to read! The age at which a child should read is also a matter of difference of opinion. Children should read well at $8\frac{1}{2}$, but many read much earlier, some at $6\frac{1}{2}$. Reading, however, is a mechanical art, and before a child is eight he should have become acquainted with many books. A child needs more mental food up to six or seven than he can get for himself, so should have books read to him and should learn to *narrate* what he has heard.

(2) "When and how are the forty-five combinations and the multiplication tables learned? When does formal arithmetic begin?"

I enclose a paper, *The Teaching of Mathematics to Young Children* (by Miss I. Stephens), which was written at the request of the Board of Education and under Miss Mason's supervision, but most children get some sense of number before six years of age.

(3) "How can the Mason system be used successfully in a group made up of three or more classes, all the children of which are below the fourth grade? There seems so little time for narration in proportion to the amount of reading it is possible to do, and the children are not yet able to write easily."

Narration must be considered from two points of view. It is the teacher's test of a child's knowledge either orally, or in writing, but is also the process by which child or adult gains knowledge and makes it his own. It is expressed silently, orally, or in writing. "We narrate and then we know," said a little girl to a Government Inspector. She had been brought up in a large school working out the P.U.S. programmes and was accustomed to narration in the three kinds above mentioned. Every child cannot narrate aloud every lesson, nor is it necessary. The teacher's part is to see that the children are trained to work by *one* reading with narration to follow. The teacher may test it in various ways, some of which are indicated in a paper (see answer 7) by the headmaster of a large boys' school; but a slavish adherence to the letter rather than the spirit even in this matter of narration will only court

disaster. Clever children will sometimes memorise an astonishing amount and will not understand what they have read or narrated. Here again the teacher must test the narration by a wise question which will lead to a discussion and will see to it that next time the passage is too long to allow of verbal memory.

(4) "The Mason system insists that there shall be 'no second readings.' Is there not literature that a child delights to read, not twice but many times? Is a second reading always fatal to interest?"

There are two kinds of reading. In desultory reading (both for pleasure and profit) a second, third or twentieth reading is necessary if we are to enjoy, or profit, by all that a great author has to say, but when a young scholar is at work "reading" (in the University sense) *in order to know*, he must perform the act of knowing. One often hears it said of quite a young child—one knows it from sad experience!—"Oh, he never forgets anything he has heard!" Why? Because a child *wants to know*. The inclination that comes to us, his elders, to procrastinate because we may get another chance, does not occur to him, so he uses his natural power of attention once for all and *he knows*. The effort of the ordinary teacher is directed towards getting and keeping the attention of the pupil, whose power of attention is dissipated in many ways as soon as he gets to school. The boy knows that he will be prodded by the teacher, that notes and summaries and revision in "prep." will offer another chance and so he lets the first chance slip and the chances are then ten to one that he will ever know! Miss Mason found that this principle was the same for child or adult. We can all pay attention when we want to know and we make the knowledge our own by letting the mind work with its "What next? What next?" until the whole is narrated either silently, orally, or in writing.

(6) "If a child is never to be interrupted or corrected, how are wrong impressions removed?"

The answer to question six follows here. Question, or correction, while the child's mind is working stops the flow of thought. As a child narrates (unless he is glibly memorising) you can almost watch his mind working. A sudden question produces a blank look and the mind is "off!" The narration of a lesson may quite well be taken up by one child after another in quick succession, continuous narration of the pages read

once. The teacher's opportunity comes when the narration is done. The children, if invited, will correct each other, and the teacher, by a judicious question, will be able to clear up or discuss any point of difficulty, not quite understood, which has appeared in the narration.

(5) "*Is a child ever permitted to memorise a poem that cannot be committed after a single reading? Is our idea of a treasury of memorised verse also a fable?*"

The above answers refer to what may be called mind-work for want of a better phrase. Memory work is a different matter; such work must be word-perfect and the habit is acquired by fixing the attention on details rather than on the whole. Tables, declensions, etc., must be learned "by rote," as we say. In the learning of poetry both mind and memory work must be made use of. Our children have anthologies and are allowed to choose what they would like to learn, or, the teacher may select two or three poems for reading and offer them for choice. The child listens to the whole poem. If for narration, he will hear it once and then narrate. (This is the answer to question 8). If for memory work he will learn it line by line, or phrase by phrase until he knows it.

(7) "*In a large group are children never bored by the narration of others, especially of those slower at narration?*"

Yes, of course the children will be bored if the teacher is not prepared for this difficulty. Mr. Husband's paper (see *Parents' Review*, September, 1924) indicates ways in which this difficulty may be met. As soon as the children can write they will have full scope for working at their own pace, but it is also well that they should learn to help each other and realise that intellectual life, either in school or in the world, has its duties to others.

(8) (Answered above) "*What is meant by 'telling' Lycidas?*"

(9) "*If there is to be a total absence of praise, blame or marks how is a child to judge his efforts, or set up a standard for himself? Are the judgments of adult minds of no value to the child?*"

Again the underlying principle must be borne in mind. The teacher's aim should be that the child must *know* that he may *grow*; if he learns to walk by means of crutches or artificial stimulants he will become dependent on them, and his growth will be retarded. If he finds that school work is chiefly accomplished by listening to the teacher, or by making a special

effort to "go one better than his neighbour," he will miss the life-giving stimulus of knowledge itself which only feeds him as he takes and assimilates it for himself. Children of outstanding ability make their own way in spite of the stumbling blocks that we teachers suffer to lie about, but the ordinary child is lulled by the teacher's voice into inertia one minute, or stung the next into a spasmodic effort which only ends in satisfaction at having attained as a goal, not knowledge but marks, or place or prize. Of course the boy has to take his place in school as he does in life; but our mistake has been in letting him think that a place either in school or in life is the thing to aim at. The judgment of his teacher is exercised rather in the teacher's own attitude towards knowledge. The child, who sees that his teacher shares his delight in knowledge of all kinds, looks at his work in a different light. School work is not then a continual struggle to scramble within the limits of a teacher's forbearance and to do what has to be done, but a happiness which brings him interests of all kinds in common with his teacher whom he also looks upon in a new light; and where most subjects bring some kind of pleasure others are accepted (if with some distaste) as the discipline of life is accepted by those who know its joys, while the teacher sees in his pupil a companion with whom his own interests may be shared.

(10) "*Is the curriculum of the Mason system usable, without change, in American Schools? What place has the literature, art, history and government of America in such a programme?*"

It would of course be necessary to make some slight modifications in the programmes as they stand for use in American schools, but the answer in the main is that there is a common foundation of world-knowledge which is the birthright of everyone and the P.U.S. programmes are based upon this. There is still an ample margin left for special knowledge belonging to local conditions. Most schools work for longer hours than those of our time-tables and Secondary Schools both here and in America will, we hope, see that boys and girls can get a liberal education in common knowledge as well as the special knowledge for local conditions; and with this foundation the specialised knowledge required for any one Public School Certificate Examination or Public Entrance Examination can be acquired in say a year at most, at the end of a pupil's school career, thus leaving him free from the trammels of public examinations until he has received "a liberal education."

E.K.

CHILDREN'S BOOKSHELVES.

"though that I konne but lyte,
On bokes for to rede I me delyte."

FOR SIX TO NINE YEARS OLD.

STORIES ABOUT CHILDREN.

- Margaret Bolland. *A Little Pair of Pilgrims*. (Sheldon Press, 3/6.)
Lord Frederick Hamilton. *P. J., The Secret Service Boy*. (Nelson, 5/-.)
Mrs. Hobart-Hampden. *The Cave of Hanuman*. (S.P.C.K., 2/-);
The Taming of Tarm. (Nisbet, 2/6 to 5/-). Also *Billy and the Boy*;
(Oxford Press, 2/6.) *Two Little Wanderers*; (Oxford Press, 2/6.) *The Secret Valley*. *Princess Ooma*. (Wells, Gardner, 3/- each.)
Amy Le Feuvre. *Martin and Margot*. (R. T. S., 3/-.)
Hugh Lofting. *The Story of Dr. Dolittle* (6/-). *The Voyages of Dr. Dolittle* (7/6). *Dr. Dolittle's Post Office* (7/6). *Dr. Dolittle's Circus* (7/6). (Cape.)
Mrs. Molesworth. *Herr Baby*. (Macmillan, 4/6.)
E. Nesbit (mainly about children—and magic). *The Amulet*. *Five Children and It*. *The Enchanted Castle*. *The Phoenix and the Carpet*. *The House of Arden*, and its sequel, *Harding's Luck*. (Fisher Unwin, 6/- each.)
Orlo Williams. *Three Naughty Children*, illustrated. (Duckworth, 7/6.)
Blackie's Annual. (5/-.)
Playbox Annual. (About 3/6.)

ANIMALS AND NATURE.

- Florence Holbrook. *A Book of Nature Myths*. (Harrap, 1/3.)
Cherry Kearton. *My Friend Toto: The Adventures of a Famous Chimpanzee*. (Arrowsmith, 5/-.)
Kipling. *The Two Jungle Books*. (Macmillan, 10/-.)
Thompson Seton. *Rolf in the Woods*. *The Sign Language*. *Wild Animals at Home*. *Wild Animal Ways*. (Hodder & Stoughton, 6/- to 8/6.)

POETRY.

- Lewis Carroll. *The Hunting of the Snark*. (Macmillan, 2/-.)
Rose Fyleman. *Fairies and Chimneys*. *Fairies and Friends*. *The Adventure Club*. (Methuen, 1/6 and 3/6 each.)
R. L. Stevenson. *A Child's Garden of Verses*. Prize Edition, illustrated. (Longman, 7/6.)
Ballads and Ballad Poems: Selected and Edited by Guy N. Pocock. (Dent, 1/6.)

FAIRY TALES.

- Laurence Housman. *Moonshine and Clover*. *A Doorway in Fairyland*. (Cape, 7/6 each.)
Kipling. *Rewards and Fairies*. (Macmillan, 6/-.)
Evelyn Sharp. *The Story of the Weathercock*. Illustrated by Charles Robinson. (Blackie, 6/-.)
English Fairy Tales. Retold by F. A. Steel, illustrated by Arthur Rackham. (Macmillan, 7/6.)
Twenty Best Fairy Tales. (6/-.)

FAIRY TALES OF OTHER RACES.

- Rosetta Baskerville. *The Flame Tree*. *The King of the Snakes*. (Folk-lore Stories from Uganda.) (S.P.C.K., 2/- each.)
Edith Howes. *Maoriland Fairy Tales*. (Ward, Lock, 4/-.)
Again my correspondents, the reporters of children's favourite books, have been more than kind. And they have sent me Fairy Tales and Fairy Tales of Other Races (the latter a well-marked modern element in juvenile literature) which are over and above what I asked—and all to the good.

May I now ask for, before March 12th, Books, any sorts, *not out of print*, to Read Aloud to Children of Six to Nine, with publishers and prices?

FLORENCE MARY PARSONS.

P.S.—Please address, Mrs. Clement Parsons, Luggershill, Broadway, Worcestershire.

BOOKS.

The Structure of Light, by Sir J. J. Thomson (Cambridge Press, 2/6). This is the first of the Fison Memorial Lectures, and therefore a short preface testifies to the life and work of Alfred Henry Fison. Professor Thomson has chosen this subject because "the study of light has resulted in achievement of insight, imagination and ingenuity unsurpassed in any field of mental activity," and because "it illustrates, too, better than any other branch of physics, the vicissitudes of theories." He puts before us "a theory on which light has a dual structure, one part of which is similar to that postulated on the undulatory theory, the other to that postulated by the corpuscular one." An interesting and valuable pamphlet.

Garden Talks, by Marion Cran, with drawings and plans by C. Smithells, F.R.H.S. (Methuen, 5/-). The author lets us into the secret of her success as a gardener in the preface.—"There is no must in the garden. It is a place where we watch for nature's hints and try to take them; it is a place of tenderness and hope, of giving and of getting—a place of vision . . . If my work in the garden could stand for anything at all, it will send people back to the eternal school, to learn for themselves by themselves at the knees of our old mother the lessons which she teaches profoundly. No book can teach as she does." A delightful book full of hope and help for "the gardener with only a back yard" as well as for "the gardener who owns miles of park."

The Roman Alphabet and its Derivatives, by A. W. Seaby (Batsford, 6/6). The lettering of the Trajan column is the source of practically all modern types and alphabets, and Professor Seaby, in making a large size reproduction of it on special wood blocks has done an important piece of work. In addition, typical examples of Renaissance, Gothic and Modern Alphabets are given. The Professor of Fine Art in the University of Reading, in an interesting introduction, traces the whole course of Roman lettering from its origin to the present day.

Handicraft in Wood and Metal, by John Hooper, M.B.E., and A. J. Shirley (Batsford, 10/6). This is a revised and enlarged edition of a handbook which has already proved its value to teachers, students and craftsmen. The authors suggest "that visits to museums by young people . . . with a view to the definite study of examples of craftwork would be of considerable advantage in leading to the formation of taste, and they think that a definite connection between the museums and the schools in this way would naturally lead to a better understanding of the advanced or fine arts." The book contains 300 illustrations, for the most part extremely good.

An African Church in Building, by the Rt. Rev. J. J. Willis (C.M.S., 2/6). The Bishop of Uganda gives his readers an illuminating survey of the development of the Uganda Church. He deals with each portion of the work of building, and shows its place in the design and purpose of the whole. The chapters on "The Material" help us to a better understanding of the African mind. The Archbishop of Canterbury contributes a Foreword, and points out how "Uganda has given a notable object-lesson for many years past to every student of missionary work," and the Church as a whole cannot fail to profit by the experience of Uganda in facing such universal problems as the creation of a self-supporting Native Church, or the part which its women must take in its life.

With the Prince to West Africa, by G. Ward Price (Gill, 3/6). The author gives a graphic account of the doings of the Prince of Wales on his recent tour to West Africa, and of the picturesque ceremonies in which the Prince took part. He also tells us much about the life and ways of the various peoples with whom the Prince came in contact, and sketches some of the problems which have to be faced by those responsible for the welfare of this rapidly-developing part of the Empire. Many excellent photographs add to the interest of the book.

A Flying Visit to the Middle East, by the Rt. Hon. Sir Samuel Hoare (Cambridge University Press, 3/6). In this book the Secretary of State for Air describes his visit by aeroplane, in the spring of 1925, to Palestine and Iraq in company with the Colonial Secretary. The purpose of their journey was to study at first-hand the problems of the administration and defence of these countries. The chapters of this book "deal with the less official aspects of the journey," but give a vivid impression, nevertheless, of conditions to-day in the ever-changing Middle East. We see history in the making, against a background of ancient civilizations, and catch echoes of Abraham and Haroun-al-Raschid, of Septimius Severus and Nebuchadnezzar. The book is well supplied with maps and photographs.

Sports and Pastimes in English Literature, compiled and edited by L. S. Wood and H. L. Burrows (Nelson, 1/9). "The Briton's attitude towards sport is as characteristic and almost as permanent a national feature as his sense of humour (to which it is closely allied), or his language." How English literature has reflected this attitude, from the days of Robin Hood and his merry men to the present time, is shown by Mr. Wood and Mr. Burrows in this anthology, which contains a wide selection of prose and poetry dealing with the subject in many varied moods.

Armour and Weapons in the Middle Ages, by C. H. Ashdown (Harrap, 7/6). This volume of *The Home Antiquary Series* gives a full and clear description of the varieties of armour and weapons used in the Middle Ages. The author shows how the development of arms and armour corresponded with the phases of the "continual struggle for supremacy between the attack and the defence," and how "each innovation" in weapons "was always followed by an attempt to devise an equipment capable of resisting the new weapon. When this had been effected another attempt was made to render the offensive more powerful," and thus every opportunity was offered to the mediaeval craftsman of exercising his skill. The volume is copiously illustrated with drawings from mediaeval MSS, sepulchral brasses, and other sources.

Fairies and Friends, by Rose Fyleman (Methuen, 3/6). In her latest volume of poems Rose Fyleman takes us into the enchanted land where "the fairies play on the beach at night" or exchange the latest gossip about the caterpillar's wedding or mock the thieving goblin. "Friends" and "Other Poems" show us some of the lovely and unexpected things to be found, like "The Spilt Rainbow," in familiar streets and among mortal folk. A book for children and grown-ups alike.

The Adventure Club, by Rose Fyleman (Methuen, 3/6). A story for eight- or nine-year-olds, telling of the adventures that befell a family of girls and boys during a holiday in the country. The greater part has appeared as a serial in "The Merry-go-Round."

BOOKS FOR LITTLE CHILDREN.

Meddlesome Matty and other Poems for Infant Minds, by Jane and Anne Taylor, with an Introduction by Edith Sitwell, illustrated by Wyndham Payne (John Lane, 6/-). Children of to-day will make the acquaintance, in this attractive little volume, of "Meddlesome Matty," "Dirty Jim," "Heedless little Emily," and many another friend who delighted their great-grandmother's childhood.

The Fairyland Express: A Book of Woodcuts for Children between the ages of three and eighty-three, by A. R. Barker (John Lane, 5/-). Mr. Barker has designed a delightful series of gay and lively woodcuts, with verses telling of a magic railway and the wonders to be found on its route.

A Picture Geography for Little Children: Part I., Asia, by Bryher, with illustrations by M. D. Cole (Jonathan Cape, 3/6).

"The world is so full of a number of things
That I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings."

The romance of far-off "things" is in this Picture Geography. Each of the countries of Asia has a spirited full-page illustration, together with a short description of its people and their curious ways, its strange animals, wonderful flowers, etc. The book will appeal to children of four.

Star Stories, by Muriel Kinney (Blackwell, 2/6). Stories, suitable for children under seven, about the principal constellations. The legends of Orion, Cassiopeia, Europa, and many others are given, as well as the less familiar Japanese story of the Weaving Lady of the Milky Way. Each month has an excellent star-map.

The Tale of Mr. Tootleoo, by Bernard and Elinor Darwin (Nonesuch Press, 6/-).

When Mr. Tootleoo was thrown
Into the ocean, all alone,
Was he despondent? Far from that;
He went on sailing in his hat.
And no adventure that befell
His equanimity could quell.
For further details, read *The Tale*
(And do not miss the noble whale).

Mr. Tootleoo will rejoice the heart of any child from three or four years of age upwards.

One-Act Plays of To-day, second series; selected by J. W. Marriott (Harrap, 2/6). Mr. Marriott has arranged another interesting selection of one-act plays by leading modern authors; amateur actors will find here a variety of material, while the general reader will welcome the opportunity of becoming more familiar with the one-act play, "in itself," as the editor points out, "an art-form as significant as the short story." The volume contains many different types of play, and includes "specimens of Irish comedy and tragedy, Lancashire comedy, ironical plays, war plays, studies in fantasy and horror, a costume play and a Nativity play." We have for instance, Synge's *Riders to the Sea*, Stanley Houghton's *The Dear Departed* and Lady Gregory's *The Rising of the Moon*. It is perhaps characteristic of present-day tendencies that a note of disillusionment runs through most of the plays; the philosophy of the authors, with a few exceptions, seems to be that:—

"As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods;
They kill us for their sport."

The Reading Girl: Saunters in Bookland and Chats on the Choice of Books and Methods of Reading, by Coulson Kernahan (Harrap, 5/-). The author places his wide knowledge and catholic taste at the disposal of those who are still at the threshold of Bookland; he guides his readers through the paths of Poetry, History, and Fiction,—to name a few only of his topics,—his purpose being "so to form and to guide taste that, while not despising the humble 'better,' my readers should care most for the great 'best.'" There are useful chapters on Libraries, Books of Reference, Books for the Nature Student, and Dictionaries, with suggestions as to how to make use of these helps.

Story Lives of XIXth Century Authors, by R. Brimley Johnson (Wells Gardner Darton, 4/6). Short biographies of Thackeray, Browning, Tennyson, George Eliot, Matthew Arnold, Samuel Butler, and R. L. Stevenson. The personality of each of these great men stands out clearly, and his literary achievements are summed up in a suggestive way. M.S.W.M.

Napoleon, by Emile Faure: translated by Jeffery E. Jeffery (Constable, 7/6). To any one who already knows the factual history of Napoleon and his times this book must prove of absorbing interest, because it is the personal point of view of a person. We shall never tire of reconsidering the deeds and words of a man near enough to our own time to have been fully reported and remembered, and far enough away to assume gigantic and heroic proportions. Emile Faure has understood how the bitter limitations of his youth were paid for in his later years, but he has realised far better than many that he *had* the "bourgeois virtues," and a heart as well as a head and that the former might have been as great as the latter. Napoleon has been too much talked of as the warrior and not enough as the organiser and the artist. He would have made a magnificent man of letters and equally a "captain of industry," and some day we shall find the world realising that order is "imagination" going before event and "governs the world," as he said himself. The scraps of quotations from Napoleon's own sayings are most valuable and illuminating. We almost see the man as he saw himself and we see history as he himself defined it when the clouds of life being past we can "trust the dazzling blaze which will remain."—R.A.P.

Foundations of Practical Harmony and Counterpoint, by R. O. Morris, Professor of Harmony and Composition in the Royal College of Music (Macmillan, 7/6). This book will become a trusty colleague in the hands of wise teachers. It will also be welcome to all students who can appreciate sound advice, a fresh presentation of principles and practice, given in a pleasant literary manner. Chapters on Harmony and Counterpoint have been separately grouped but the author suggests that the study of the two branches should proceed concurrently to a large extent and he gives directions which make this possible. Especially delightful are the exercises throughout the book; they are of the kind which invite and attract the student and which should necessitate intelligent work. Much excellent advice could be quoted especially from chapters on Harmonisation and Modulation.—E.C.

Personal Religion and the Life of Fellowship, by William Temple (Longmans, 2/6). We are grateful to the Bishop of Manchester for a thoughtful and able volume, one more of a series which is published year by year as being suitable for Lenten reading. The subject is the much discussed one of brotherhood and of the immense task before the Church in showing that personal discipleship involves fellowship. "In a great variety of ways we have made religion again into a private affair between man and his Maker. That is what the higher pagan religions are. But the Christianity of the New Testament is an intensely public thing . . . You cannot be a good Christian all by yourself." And so the various chapters deal with such subjects—Christianity and History, Worship and Fellowship, Discipleship and Politics, Discipleship and Economics, The Church and the Kingdom of God.

OUR WORK.

HOUSE OF EDUCATION.

Ladies wishing to engage probationers for the summer holidays should apply as soon as possible. Second year students take holiday engagements for a month or six weeks in the summer. This is an opportunity to get help in Nature Work, handicrafts and some insight into P.U.S. methods generally. In some cases students are permanently engaged for after Christmas.

PARENTS' UNION SCHOOL.

As Easter falls so early the examination papers will be sent out for Monday, March 22nd. Members who will not have had ten weeks' work on the programmes may postpone the examination but are in this case asked to send a postcard to Ambleside.

LETTER BAG.

November 29th, 1925.

DEAR EDITOR,—Mrs. Franklin's visit to Bulawayo was followed—as in so many other places which she has visited—by the accession of many new members and by the formation of a new branch. A drawing-room meeting to hear her was kindly held by Mrs. Russell, on Tuesday, November 24th. A large number of those interested were present and much enthusiasm and interest were aroused by Mrs. Franklin's eloquent address. At this first meeting—after describing the work of P.N.E.U. and P.U.S.—Mrs. Franklin spoke to us with great earnestness of the Child as a Person, and the parents and teachers present received new inspiration from her. The following morning a demonstration was held at S. Peter's School, by kind permission of the Sister Superior, the subjects taken by Mrs. Gould being a tale from the *Adventures of Ulysses* (for little girls averaging about seven years) and Picture Study (for older girls about twelve). Mrs. Gould effectually showed us how the P.N.E.U. method—even with children new to her as well as to the method, and doubtless rendered self-conscious by the presence of parents and visitors—brings out the latent thought and observation as well as the power of visualisation which are innate in all children.

At the public meeting (held under the auspices of the Rhodesia Scientific Association) on the same evening at the Beit Hall Milton School (by kind permission of the Acting Head Master), Mr. Miolee (Vice-President) occupied the Chair in the unavoidable and regretted absence of the President (Mr. Justice Russell) at Salisbury, and introduced Mrs. Franklin. A large audience had assembled, including Mr. L. M. Foggin, Director of Education for Southern Rhodesia, and all listened with rapt attention to Mrs. Franklin's address. At the conclusion, Mr. Foggin thanked Mrs. Franklin for her kindness in coming so far to tell Rhodesian parents and teachers of the P.N.E.U. He was astounded, he said, at the idea that children could, after once hearing and receiving ideas and giving them back again, really "know" them. He was also much impressed by the amount of really great literature to which P.U.S. children were introduced. He wished the newly-formed branch all success. Mrs. Franklin, in thanking Mr. Foggin for his kind remarks and good wishes, expressed her hope that Mr. Foggin might perhaps become in time "the Mr. Household of South Africa."

Mrs. Franklin held a meeting at Plumtree School before her arrival in Bulawayo, by kind invitation of the Head Master, Mr. Hammond, and has now gone on to the Falls where (Livingstone) there are several members and friends. She leaves for Cape Town on the 1st, but we all

feel that she has left us a great and happy memory of enthusiasm and of new ideas, and that her visit has helped us and inspired us, even more, perhaps, than we can now realise. We hope the new branch will succeed in keeping parents and those interested in touch with one another, as well as in giving us actual demonstrations and lectures, nature rambles, astronomy walks, musical appreciation studies, and other activities likely to be of direct help and guidance. Mrs. Franklin has also kindly promised us that on her return to England she will put before the Council the aspiration of the members of the Bulawayo branch for the nucleus of a local lending library of educational books.—We are, yours sincerely,

K. VARVILL,
C. E. FRIPP, *Joint Hon. Secs.*

P.N.E.U. NOTES.

Edited by the General Secretary, 26, Victoria Street, S.W.1.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 1926.

The Annual Conference will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday, May 18th and 19th, at Caxton Hall, Westminster. Among the speakers will be: The Hon. Mrs. Franklin; Mr. T. R. Glover, Public Orator in the University of Cambridge; The Rev. The Hon. Edward Lyttelton, D.D.; Mr. F. B. Malim, Master of Wellington College, Berks.; the Rev. Canon Woodwood and others.

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, FEBRUARY 2ND, 1926.

Dr. Costley-White moved from the Chair a vote of condolence to Dr. Helen Webb's relatives in the great loss they had sustained by her death. Dr. Webb had been a most valued member of this Committee, and had also served on other associations connected with Miss Mason's work.

It was arranged that Miss Jotcham should represent the P.N.E.U. at the funeral.

The Committee welcomed Mrs. Franklin back from her tour in South Africa with the greatest pleasure.

Mrs. Franklin reported that Miss Whyte had consented to remain on as General Secretary as long as her private affairs allowed of it.

206 new members were formally adopted. 129 of these also joined the Parents' Union School. It was noted that many of these came from South Africa and Ireland.

The Report of the Ambleside Council was read.

Mrs. Glover, Chairman of the Conference Sub-Committee, submitted the Conference programme as so far arranged. The Chairman congratulated her on its excellence.

Mrs. Franklin referred members for details of her South Africa tour to Mrs. Gould's diary in the *Review*. A letter of thanks was passed thanking Mrs. Alston, President of the Cape Town Area, for all she had done. Mrs. Glover read some of the many letters expressing thanks to Mrs. Franklin for her lectures. Lady Aberdeen said that she had received similar letters from members of the National Council of Women.

Mrs. Franklin then made the following statement: She said that many families and schools in South Africa had entered the Parents' Union School and many more would follow. She felt so strongly that the

work must be followed up, that she asked the Committee to allow Miss Pennethorne, who was willing to do so, to go and carry on the work in South Africa which had been begun. After discussion as to ways and means a resolution embodying Mrs. Franklin's suggestion was moved by The President, Lady Aberdeen, and seconded by Mr. Vincent Ranger. This was carried. Many testimonials to the excellence of Miss Pennethorne's work and regrets that her energy and knowledge would no longer be available here, were expressed by the members of the Committee.

Mrs. Franklin asked for a grant up to £50 to buy more copies of Miss Mason's books for the Library. This was put to the meeting and passed. Miss Pennethorne reported a busy three months' work.

A considerable amount of propaganda work had been done from the Office—among other things a letter on the work of the Parents' Union School had been sent to 33 Indian newspapers.

A letter had also been sent to the Directors of various steamship companies asking them to see that Miss Mason's books were included in their Ships' Libraries.

Office statistics for November, December and January stood as follows: Letters received 6,334; letters despatched 8,102; parcels despatched 2,255; callers at the Office 448.

Mrs. Newth brought a good report from the Northwood Branch, and new Branches were reported in Pretoria and Bulawayo.

The programme of the new P.N.E.U. Reading Course was submitted to the Committee, and, with one or two further suggestions, it was approved. The Secretary was asked to write and thank The Lady Cottlesloe for her kind help in the matter.

The next meeting was fixed for Tuesday, March 23rd.

CENTRAL OFFICE LENDING LIBRARY.

FINES. Members are asked to note that it has now been decided to charge a fine of 3d. a week on each book kept beyond the legitimate four weeks, without being renewed. This has been found necessary owing to the fact that some members keep the books they have borrowed for months in spite of requests for their return.

ORGANISING SECRETARY'S MEETINGS.*

| | March |
|--------------------|---|
| CIRENCESTER | 2nd. Apply Miss Denly, Ingleside, Cirencester. |
| FAIRFORD | 3rd. School visits. |
| CHEAM | 12th. Apply Miss Armitage, P.N.E.U. School, Cheam. |
| KESTON | 15th. Apply Miss Andrews, Barnehurst, Keston, Kent. |
| STRATHFIELDSAYE .. | 18th. Apply Mrs. Barker, Strathfieldsaye Rectory, W. Reading. |
| GUILDFORD | 19th. Apply Mrs. Baring Gould, Merrow Grange, Guildford. |

Also possibly Eye and Woodbridge.

* Where particulars are not given please apply to Central Office.

FUTURE BRANCH MEETINGS.

For further particulars apply to the Hon. Secretary of the Branch.

- BIRMINGHAM March 18th. At 8.15, "The Child's faulty adaptations to life and some ways of avoiding them," Dr. A. Helen Boyle.
- BUCKHURST HILL .. 11th. "Rewards and Fairies," by the Rev. H. Costley-White, D.D. Hostess: Miss Gardner.
- BULAWAYO Mrs. Linnell, who has professional qualifications for this work, has kindly consented to hold a "Games Afternoon" for members' children every Tuesday, at 5 p.m., at 55, Livingstone Rd., Bulawayo; and Mrs. Swanson has also been good enough to promise that she will give "Musical Appreciation" Classes for members' children on the second Tuesday in each month (on which days Mrs. Linnell's Games will not be held), at 5 p.m., beginning February 9th.
- It is hoped that the next quarterly meeting of this branch will consist of a Medical Lecture on "Children's Health."
- BURGESS HILL 1st. Annual General Meeting (subscriptions due).
- 22nd. At the Congregational Hall, Junction Head, at 5 p.m., "Birdland Cameos" (Lantern Slides), by Captain Oliver Pike, F.Z.S., F.R.P.S., M.B.O.U. Admission 1/-.
- CAMBRIDGE 24th. At the Henry Martyn Hall, Holy Trinity, Miss Essex Cholmondeley will speak at 3 p.m. to young people, and at 5.15 p.m., to teachers.
- DUBLIN 2nd. At 3.30 p.m., at The Palace, 50, St. Stephen's Green, "The Love of Beauty in Children," by Mrs. Sinclair Stevenson, M.A., D.Sc., F.R.A.I. Hostess: Mrs. Gregg.
- LONDON 17th. At 3 p.m., at 12, Smith Square, Westminster (by kind permission of Mrs. Walter Rea), "Heredity in the Schoolroom," by Mrs. C. B. S. Hodson, F.L.S. (Secretary of the Eugenics Education Society). The Hon. Mrs. Franklin in the Chair.
- NORTHWOOD 18th. At 4.15 p.m., at St. Helen's School, "Fear," by Dr. Alice Hutchison.
- SUREBITON 10th. At 3 p.m., at 295, King's Road, Kingston, Miss Proctor on "History Teaching of the Future."

- ST. ALBANS Nature Ramble, conducted by Miss Bruce Low (Student of the House of Education).
- WAKEFIELD 1st. At 4.15 p.m., at the High School, "Hygiene of the Adolescent Period," by Dr. Clara Stewart. (For Women only.)
- 9th. At 3 p.m., at the Junior Grammar School, the Annual Meeting.
- WANSTEAD 5th. A Conference of Mothers, led by Mrs. Inskip. Subject: "What shall we teach our babies?" It is earnestly hoped that members will bring forward their ideas and difficulties. Hostess: Mrs. Plunkett, Hillcrest, Hermon Hill.

PAST BRANCH MEETINGS.

BIRMINGHAM.—The Birmingham members very much enjoyed their tours to the Art Gallery, on February 2nd, conducted by Mr. Eric Whitley, M.A. He gave very interesting studies of the lives of the "Early English Water Colour Painters," and described their methods.

BUCKHURST HILL.—A successful meeting was held on 31st January, at Oaklea, when the Rev. A. Gell, M.A., Vicar of Loughton, spoke on "The Key to the Situation." He urged the necessity of inculcating the ideal of a life of service—which he felt to be the key to modern life—into the minds of the children under our care. We owe Mr. Gell a debt of gratitude for his inspiring address.

BULAWAYO.—We hear from Bulawayo that in answer to the resolution sent by the Branch to Mr. Foggin, Director of Education for Southern Rhodesia, he has replied as follows:—"I am quite ready, in accordance with your suggestion, to allow teachers of farm schools, who may so desire to make use of the P.N.E.U. syllabuses of work for schools."

As to the second part of the resolution, he is making enquiries. A meeting was held on January 25th, when Mrs. Gordon, of the Eveline High School, gave an interesting paper on "The Beginnings of Arithmetic."

BURGESS HILL.—On December 7th, Mr. Philip Johnston gave a most interesting lecture on "Old Churches and Houses in Sussex," illustrated by some wonderful photographs and lantern slides. He considers that archæology is the handmaid of history, and counts it as gross vandalism to pull down ancient buildings and churches or to allow them to fall into disrepair.

CAMBRIDGE.—On January 30th, a meeting was held at Owlstone Croft, Cambridge, when Mrs. Clement Parsons spoke on the cultivation of literary taste in children. Mrs. Parsons called her paper "Reading Without Tears," and her stimulating and delightful lecture aroused much interest. Professor Sir Arthur Quiller Couch, kindly took the Chair—an honour much appreciated by everyone.

DUBLIN.—On January 15th, at St. Margaret's Hall, by kind invitation of Dr. Badham, Mr. Standing, B.Sc., Dip.Mont., lectured to a large appreciative audience on the principles underlying the Montessori System. He paid high tribute to the P.N.E.U. and told of the success of one school where the infants passed from the Montessori System to the Parents' Union School.

LONDON.—On Thursday, 11th February, at 35, Hertford Street, W., by kind permission of The Misses Lawson Johnston, the Rev. A Herbert Gray, D.D., spoke on "Parents and their Elder Children." Mrs. Howard Glover presided, and there was a very large attendance—about 100 people being present. It is hoped that Dr. Gray's paper on this extremely interesting subject will appear in full in the *Review*.

MAIDENHEAD.—On December 18th, Mr. W. M. Webb gave a most interesting lecture on "Curiosities of Plant Life," illustrated by lantern slides, those of various plants being particularly beautiful. It was unfortunate that more members were not present to enjoy this lecture.

NORTHWOOD.—A meeting was held on January 28th, at Northwood College. The attendance was average. Professor Watson, the lecturer, who spoke on Canada, painted a vivid picture of Canadian life, and held his audience spellbound with interest. A few questions were asked at the end of the lecture.

PRETORIA.—A first meeting of this Branch has been held and 46 members joined.

ST. ALBANS.—A meeting was held on February 2nd, at The Limes, when Miss Bentham, Secretary to the Students' Careers Association, gave a most interesting lecture on Vocational Training and Careers for Girls. She had an intimate knowledge of her subject, and made it plain how many openings there are nowadays for girls on leaving school.

SURBITON.—On February 9th, at Kyle House School, by kind invitation of Miss Forrest, Mrs. Gardner, B.A., gave an interesting address on "The Psychology of Colour." Mrs. Gardner spoke of the healing power of colour and light, and the exciting, depressing or soothing influence of some colours. The most healing is green, the background of life.

WAKEFIELD.—On Friday, January 29th, a most delightful lecture and demonstration was given by Miss Susie Lee, L.R.A.M., on "The Joyway to Health and Grace." The children who illustrated the lecture were not known to Miss Lee, and some of them had never danced before, but she so infected them with her enthusiasm that they all joined with her and danced with a grace and spontaneity which made all the "grown-ups" long to join in too.

WANSTEAD.—The Annual Party was held on January 28th, at Holy Trinity Hall, from 3.15 to 5.15. Each member wore a badge representing a well-known town in the British Isles, some of which were very ingenious and clever. The result of the Competition was announced after tea, and the last half hour was devoted to music, provided by the members.

On February 10th, a meeting was held at Cheltondale, New Wanstead, by the kind invitation of Mrs. Hamlett. Mrs. Clare Goslett gave a most interesting and practical lecture on "Mind Troubles of the Child," dealing especially with the nervous child. In the Chair, Mrs. Joseph. Members present 45.

The Annual General Meeting of the Parents' Union School Association will be held on Saturday, March 20th, at 3 o'clock, at the Leisure Club, 16, Gordon Square, W.C.1 (nearest tube Station: Euston Sq.). Speaker: Major Bavin. Subject: From Folk Song to Symphony. Tea will be provided. Ex-students are cordially invited. N. Wyllie, Hon. Sec., Grove Cottage, Bushey Hall Road, Watford.

Parents' National Educational Union.

FOUNDED 1888.

INCORPORATED 1921.

Founder—MISS CHARLOTTE M. MASON.

Presidents—

THE MOST HON. THE MARQUIS AND MARCHIONESS OF ABERDEEN AND TEMAIR.

Chairman of the Executive Committee—THE REV. H. COSTLEY-WHITE, D.D.

Hon. Treasurer—COL. THE HON. DOUGLAS CARNEGIE.

Hon. Sec.—THE HON. MRS. FRANKLIN.

General Secretary—MISS WHYTE.

Org. Sec.—MISS PENNETHORNE.

Central Office: 26, VICTORIA STREET, S.W.1.

The Parents' National Educational Union was founded in 1888 in response to a demand from thoughtful parents who desired to know how to give intelligent supervision and guidance to the development of their children's whole nature—physical, mental, moral and spiritual.

Its objects are:—(a) To assist parents of all classes to understand the best principles and methods of Education in all its aspects, those which concern the formation of character, as well as actual methods of teaching. (b) To create a better public feeling on the subject of the training of children, and, with this object in view, to collect and make known the best information and experience on the subject. (c) To afford to parents opportunities for co-operation and consultation, so that the wisdom and experience of each may be profitable to all. (d) To stimulate their enthusiasm, through the sympathy of numbers acting together. (e) To secure greater unity and continuity of Education, by harmonizing home and school training.

The Union aims at giving opportunities for the study of educational problems, and being a meeting ground for intercourse between parents, teachers, and all who are interested in Education. It offers to its members a theory and practice of Education (evolved by Miss Mason) which are found to be most successful both in families and schools of every grade. Among its Central Principles is that a religious basis of work be maintained.

The Parents' Union School. This correspondence school was devised in 1890 for introducing regular work and school training into Home Schoolrooms. Children are classified according to their powers. A Time-Table and Syllabus of work is set for each term in six Forms (ages, six to eighteen) and at the end of the term the pupils receive Examination papers, on which the work done by each child is tested.

The distinctive curriculum of the Parents' Union School offers to the pupils a liberal education and gives them an opportunity of establishing relations with living ideas through the study of many great books as well as through nature, art, music, science and handicrafts.

Many hundreds of Home Schoolrooms all over the world, a large number of Secondary Schools and some hundreds of public Elementary Schools are now following the Parents' Union School programmes.

The House of Education, Ambleside. A Secondary Training College (started 1891) for teachers in families, classes and schools, working in the Parents' Union School. The interest felt in the House of Education is widespread and the demand for teachers trained there exceeds the supply.

Parents' National Educational Union.

FOUNDED 1888.

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We wish to become Members of the Parents' National Educational Union, subject to your Memorandum and Articles of Association, and herewith enclose 15s. 6d. Kindly furnish us with all information concerning the Branch or Area Organisation (if any) in our district.

Names.....

(Mr. and Mrs.) (Please insert correct form of address.)

Address.....

The Subscription (which includes both members of the household) is 15s. 6d. per annum; Teachers in Public Elementary Schools, 7s. 6d.

The advantages offered to Members are:—

A monthly copy of the *Parents' Review*.

A free ticket for the Annual Meeting, and free attendance at any Meetings or Lectures advertised in the *Review* wherever they may take place.

Opportunity for co-operation and consultation between parents and teachers, who meet here on the same ground.

Opportunity to attend such natural history excursions, reading circles, P.U.S. classes, musical appreciation classes, Shakespeare readings, study circles, etc., as may be arranged in the neighbourhood.

The use of the large library of educational works which is kept at the Central Office.

P.N.E.U. Reading Course for young mothers and elder girls; this is open to members. Fee 10/6 a year, to include examinations.

The Parents' Union School; this is open to members on payment of special school fees.

The House of Education. A Secondary Training College for teachers in families, classes and schools working in the Parents' Union School.

Membership is not confined to parents; all interested in education may join.

Copies of the Memorandum and Articles of Association can be had by those who require them from the Central Office (price 1s.).

All further particulars can be had from the General Secretary, P.N.E.U., 26, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

Office open—10 a.m. to 1 p.m., 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., except Saturdays. (Telephone 479 Victoria).

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BRITISH EAST AFRICA, NAIROBI.—Enquiries to Mrs. Albrechtsen, Poste Restante, or L. R. Orr, Esq., Director of Education.